





## Americans in S. Arabia targets in fresh threats

DUBAI (R) — Fresh threats of possible attacks in Saudi Arabia are aimed specifically against Americans and do not concern other Westerners, diplomats in Riyadh said on Thursday.

The United States, passing on a message from its embassy in the Saudi capital, said on Wednesday it had received disturbing new reports about possible attacks against American interests in the kingdom.

"It sounds pretty alarming," a diplomat reached by telephone from Dubai said. "But it's quite clearly aimed at the Americans, not other Westerners."

The embassy message did not spell out the source of the reports, but analysts said the United States and its interests in the Middle East were facing threats from at least two directions.

The 35,000 Americans in Saudi Arabia, many of them working in the country's huge oil industry and support businesses, have been on heightened security alert since Nov. 13 when a car bomb killed five Americans and two Indians at a Saudi national guard training centre in Riyadh run by U.S. personnel.

Several little-known groups of conservative Islamists opposed to U.S. influence in the kingdom claimed responsibility for the attack but no arrests have been announced despite U.S. and Saudi offers of large cash rewards.

A second threat to Amer-

icans in the Middle East comes from supporters of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, a fiery Egyptian cleric jailed for life with no prospect of parole by a U.S. federal judge in New York on Jan. 17 on charges of planning a war of violence in the United States.

Nine of his followers were jailed for long prison terms. After the convictions militants in Egypt swore revenge on American targets, proclaiming: "The Americans have chosen war with Islam."

The United States tightened security at U.S. airports for fear of violent revenge. U.S. embassies and other centres abroad went on heightened alert.

The latest American warning said the Riyadh embassy had received new and disturbing reports that additional attacks may be planned against institutions identified with the United States and its interests in Saudi Arabia.

"While these attacks could occur anywhere in the kingdom and include official as well as unofficial targets, the U.S. embassy believes that potential targets in Riyadh are especially at risk at the present time," it said.

The embassy and Saudi security authorities were working closely to take additional steps to ensure the safety of Americans.

"The embassy reiterates that all Americans in Saudi Arabia should continue to exercise caution, keep a low profile, reduce travel within Saudi Arabia, and treat mail received from unfamiliar sources with suspicion."

It also repeated a U.S. State Department warning last month following the jailing of Sheikh Abdul Rahman.

"The department advises Americans travelling abroad that there may be an increased risk of terrorist acts carried out by the sheik's supporters against American interests," it said.

One of those who revised his travel plans was Secretary of State Warren Christopher who had planned to go to Riyadh next week to meet Saudi Arabia's new regent, Crown Prince Abdullah, for the first time.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said there were scheduling problems that prevented the visit. But the receipt of the new threats may have been the real reason.

Prince Abdullah, who met U.S. Ambassador Raymond Mabus in Riyadh on Wednesday, was put in charge of the affairs of state on Jan. 1 by King Fahd while the recuperates from a stroke.

The 74-year-old king received Prince Abdullah and scores of senior members of the Saudi royal family as well as officials including Ibrahim Al Assaf, named by the monarch on Monday as new finance and economy minister.

In appearances on Saudi state television the king "looks frail but is seen joking with his visitors," a Western diplomat in Riyadh said. "It puts the lie to foreign reports that he is gravely ill."

## Hizbollah demands apology from U.S. envoy in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — The Pro-Iranian Hizbollah has demanded an apology from new U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones who was quoted by Lebanese newspapers as calling the militant faction and its members of parliament (MPs) terrorists.

"The U.S. ambassador's remarks are a hostile start for an official who wants to represent his country in a country that has suffered a lot from American policy and its aggressiveness and mistakes," Hizbollah (Party of God) said in a statement.

The group, which has eight members in Lebanon's 128-seat parliament, said the reported remarks were "a flagrant insult to the Lebanese people and their parliament and necessitate apologising to the people and its representatives."

It said the Lebanese government should refuse to

accept such a message from Jones when he presented his credentials.

Mr. Jones, who is due to take up his post this month, was quoted by the Beirut daily *Al Nahar* as saying in an interview in Washington published on Tuesday, "The United States considers Hizbollah to be a terrorist organisation."

"If Jones' remarks are the essence of what he will say when he presents his credentials in Beirut, then Lebanese authorities should protest severely and refuse to accept such messages which show their bearer doesn't have courtesy or knowledge of diplomatic and political basics," Hizbollah said.

Hizbollah is suspected of being linked to clandestine groups that waged an anti-Western campaign of bombings, kidnappings and killings in Lebanon in the 1980s.

## Japanese unit arrives on Golan

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A first group of 16 Japanese peacekeepers arrived Thursday in Damascus to take part in United Nations operations on the Golan Heights, the official Syrian news agency said.

The group — 14 members of the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) and two civilians — will be joined by a second team of 29 SDF members as due to leave Japan on Feb. 7.

They are to replace a Canadian unit carrying out transport duties along the buffer zone between Syria and Israel on the strategic plateau.

Japan will also send 60 air SDF troops to fly and maintain two C-130 Hercules transporters being used to ferry supplies to the Japanese contingent during its two-year tour of duty, officials in Tokyo said.

Japan's constitution bans dispatch of military forces abroad to solve disputes, but new laws introduced in 1992 allow Tokyo to send soldiers on peacekeeping missions in disputed areas on condition that a peace accord exists.

## Gulf Arabs must act together against threats — Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Gulf Arab countries should forge closer links to deter threats to their security, Kuwait's prime minister said in remarks published on Thursday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, who is also crown prince, added the only way for former occupier Iraq to end its people's suffering was to abide by all U.N. Gulf war resolutions, the official Kuwait News Agency reported.

"Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah underlined the importance of forging closer cooperation among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to deter foreign threats against them," the agency said.

"Countries of the council will be able to face any dangers, God willing, if they press ahead with vigour and sincerity towards the path of integration," it quoted him as saying.

The agency did not elaborate on the perceived threats to the Gulf. But it noted Kuwait had expressed support for Bahraini authorities following political unrest by opposition activists calling for the revival of Bahrain's parliament.

The GCC comprises Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain.

The agency said Sheikh Saad made his remarks in an interview due to be published shortly in the *Al Hawadeth* weekly magazine to mark the fifth anniversary of the country's Gulf war liberation from a seven-month Iraqi occupation.

On U.N. sanctions against Iraq, Sheikh Saad reiterated previous government statements by saying the suffering of Iraqis was caused by their government's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"Kuwait did not cause their hardships," he was reported as saying. "(President) Saddam Hussein, the head of the Iraqi regime, is responsible for the hardships of his people because of his refusal to implement U.N. resolutions."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Canal to supply south Iraq with drinking water

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq has begun work on a new canal to take drinking water to the southern city of Basra, Irrigation Minister Mahmoud Diab Al Ahmad said Thursday. The 230-kilometre canal will take water from the Tigris River at Nassiriya to Basra, the minister told AFP. Basra's water supplies were badly damaged during Iraq's 1980-1988 war with Iran, as well as the 1991 Gulf war. The \$2-million project will supply the city with up to 266 million litres of water per day when work is completed in two years.

### Britain prepares report on arms to Iraq

LONDON (AFP) — A panel that probed illegal British arms sales to Iraq will issue its report on February 15, the government said. The government set up the so-called Scott enquiry after the acquittal in November 1992 of three executives of the Matrix-Churchill machine tool company. The three had been charged with violating an international arms embargo against Iraq. An appeals court concluded that the government had secretly encouraged their sales. Through 1993 and 1994 the Scott committee heard 67 witnesses, including several government members, as well as both former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her successor John Major. The Scott committee has to identify anyone who had encouraged the secret illegal arms trade, and decide in particular whether government ministers had lied to parliament in stating during 1988-90 that the embargo had been strictly adhered to.

### Saudi container ship sinks off Cyprus

NICOSIA (AFP) — A Saudi-flagged container ship sank off the coast of northern Cyprus, but its 10 crew members were rescued, officials said Thursday. A spokesman for the Cyprus ports authority said the "Seal Vanamar" set sail Tuesday from the Cypriot port of Limassol and was headed for the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Burgas. Reports from Turkish-held northern Cyprus, however, said that the ship sank off the eastern tip of the island while sailing for Mersin, in southern Turkey. The port's spokesman told the official Cyprus News Agency that the vessel had a capacity of 1,018 tonnes and was carrying 500 tonnes of steel loaded in the Ukraine, and 19 containers with cigarettes.

### 4 Shin Bet agents suspended for embezzlement

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Four members of Israel's internal security service Shin Bet were suspended on suspicion of embezzling funds used to pay off Palestinian informants in the West Bank, Israeli television said Thursday. A Shin Bet official and three agents are accused of taking money for the informants and other activities, and face possible criminal prosecution, the report said. The head of Shin Bet, Admiral Ami Ayalon, ordered the four suspended pending a complete investigation into the matter. The former director of Shin Bet, whose name was kept secret, was forced to resign because of security lapses surrounding the assassination on Nov. 4 of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

### Former Israeli military attaché charged with embezzling

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A former military attaché at the Israeli embassy in Singapore and his wife have been charged with embezzling state funds during their posting in the city state, judicial sources said. General Yehuda Peled, 56, and his wife Avital, 53, were accused of stealing \$41,000 between 1989 and 1993 by buying cheap airline tickets and getting reimbursed full fare prices, the sources said. The couple were indicted in January but the affair was kept secret out of concern that it could harm relations between Israel and Singapore. The court finally agreed to make the case public at the demand of several Israeli newspapers, which published the details on Friday. But the court prohibited the publication of details concerning another case of alleged embezzlement by the couple.

### UAE ferries food, medicine to Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — United Arab Emirates has shipped 4,000 tonnes of medicine and food to Iraq as a gift to the Iraqi people, the Iraqi News Agency reported on Thursday. IMA said a UAE ship docked on Thursday at Umm Qasr, Iraq's port on the northern Gulf, and its cargo would be transferred to Iraq's Red Crescent Society. The UAE backs a lifting of the U.N. Sanctions on Iraq.

### 3 found guilty in Iraq 'super gun' trial

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (R) — Three executives of Swiss engineering group Von Roll, including its former managing director, were found guilty on Wednesday of illegally exporting parts of a planned "super gun" to Iraq. The three each received a suspended one-month prison sentence and fines ranging from 8,000 to 25,000 Swiss francs (\$6,580-\$20,570), the Swiss news agency reported. The largest fine was handed to former Von Roll head Heinz Frech. But the director of another company accused of having acted as an intermediary was cleared of all charges and received compensation of 120,000 francs (\$98,800) from Switzerland's highest criminal court. Swiss authorities seized a shipment of hydraulic cylinders made by Von Roll at Bern railway station in April 1990. Other parts made by the firm were seized in Frankfurt. The firm denied knowingly making any illegal sales and defence lawyers at the trial argued that the so-called "super gun", a 350-mm calibre cannon which was never built, was not a weapon of war but an ill-conceived satellite launcher. Swiss law forbids firms making arms sales to foreign governments without permission.

## Rabin assassin to undergo sanity test

TEL AVIV (R) — Yitzhak Rabin's assassin Yigal Amir agreed at his murder trial on Thursday to undergo psychiatric tests after long resisting an insanity defence.

Earlier Amir sat emotionless, his face frozen, while prosecutors screened an amateur video showing him killing the prime minister in a bid to stop peace moves with the Arabs.

Amir, 25, accepted the court's proposal he undergo psychiatric tests to examine his mental state when he killed Mr. Rabin in November and determine if he was fit to stand trial.

"It is possible that the new line of defence will be different from what has been used so far," Shmuel Fleishman, his new defence attorney, told the three-judge Tel Aviv court.

"We need this medical opinion whether or not it comes from a court-appointed psychiatrist or a psychiatrist for the defence."

Amir faces a maximum life sentence if found guilty of premeditated murder.

Prosecutor Prina Guy said she was surprised by the proposal, saying Amir, a third-year law student, had shown prowess handling much of his own legal defence.

"I am surprised by this matter. Over the past 2½ months we have seen how the suspect proudly details how he murdered Mr. Rabin and cross-examines witnesses with great skill," she said.

## 'U.S. backed Saudi arms for Bosnia'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Saudi Arabia channelled \$300 million worth of arms to Bosnia, around \$50 million over the past three years.

A Saudi official quoted by the Washington Post said that this Bosnian arms programme was similar to a programme set up to back rebels battling Soviet troops in Afghanistan during the 1980s. This operation was not officially supported by the United States.

But, in contrast with Afghanistan, the Saudi official said, "The U.S. role" was more than just turning a blind eye to what was going on... it was consent combined with stealth cooperation.

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this aid came in addition to Saudi humanitarian aid to Bosnia, around \$50 million over the past three years.

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"American knowledge began under Bush and became

much greater under Clinton," he was quoted by the newspaper as saying.

The White House spokesman said: "Whatever the Saudis claim to have done was not in concert with us with our approval."

"Most of the weapons transited through Croatia, the Saudi official was quoted as saying. He added that emergency deliveries were made at night to Tuzla airport, or other airports under Bosnian control.

If the Saudi reports prove to be true, the United States clearly took great care to respect the principle of plausible deniability by using intermediaries such as former military staff or intelligence

agents, the Washington Post said.

In an interview published this week, David Owen, the former European Union (EU) negotiator for Bosnia, said he believed, along with Paris and London, that Washington had probably supplied Bosnian and Croatia with arms, but that such an allegation was impossible to prove.

Asked about future arms supplies to Bosnia after NATO's implementation force pulls out in a year, the Saudi official said that his country was prepared to cover between 15 to 25 per cent of the cost, and that negotiations on the issue were currently underway.

## Moroccan-Algerian dispute threatens Maghreb union

By Kate Dourian  
Reuter

RABAT — A row between Morocco and Algeria over the disputed Western Sahara is threatening to tear apart the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), once seen as an embryonic North African common market, diplomats said on Thursday.

Foreign ministers from all five members states — Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia — were due to meet in Algeria this month to prepare for a summit in March, but their talks have been postponed indefinitely, the diplomats said.

"The foreign ministers' meeting has been postponed... because of the dispute and I don't expect anything new to happen until after the end of Ramadan," one Arab diplomat said.

No official date has been set for the summit, he added.

Moroccan King Hassan, angered by what his government called "Algeria's involvement" in the Western Sahara issue, in December demanded a freeze on the union's activities, forcing suspension of plans to hold a summit in Rabat next month.

The AMU was created in 1989 to promote trade and cooperation but has been paralysed by disputes, mainly between Algeria and Morocco. The summit had also been due to look into Egypt's application to join.

"The single biggest blow to the AMU was the closure of the Algerian-Moroccan border," a Western diplomat said. "The problems are between Morocco and Algeria over the Sahara, Libya and sanctions."

Relations between Morocco and Algeria, frequently tense over the Western Sahara, deteriorated after Muslim fundamentalists of Algerian origin attacked a

Marrakesh hotel in August 1994, killing two Spanish tourists.

Morocco accused Algerian security forces of training the gunmen and demanded entry visas for Algerian citizens.

Algeria, suffering from conflict between security forces and Muslim fundamentalists for the past four years, responded by closing its land border with Morocco.

The Western diplomat said some member states had taken steps to harmonise policy on matters like insurance, pollution, energy and trade.

"Real things have happened but all these are being destroyed by the Algerian-Morocco dispute," the diplomat said.

Last December, Rabat asked Algeria to freeze the union's activities in anger at Algeria's opposition to United Nations proposals to speed up a referendum in

Western Sahara, which is long overdue.

Algeria's support for the Polisario Front, which seeks independence in the Western Sahara, has always been a source of tension between the two neighbours.

The Polisario Front waged a guerrilla war against Morocco for nearly 20 years and the future of the desert territory, claimed by Rabat, is to be decided in a U.N. referendum, now tentatively scheduled to be held sometime next year.

Emissaries from Libya and Tunisia came to Morocco last month to plead with the king to rescind his demand for a freeze of AMU activities but he refused.

Intense diplomatic contacts among the four other members and a more recent visit by a second Libyan envoy to Rabat failed to resolve the dispute.

"The summit should have been held in December but

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

#### PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 ... Moonlight (cartoon)  
14:30 ... Wish Kid (cartoon)  
15:00 ... Harry and the Hendersons  
15:25 ... Blue Heelers  
16:00 ... Drama — Carry On  
17:00 ... Doc — Carry On  
17:15 ... Cupido  
17:30 ... Serie — Les Compagnons de l'Adventure  
18:00 ... Serie — Chateau Vallon  
19:00 ... News in French  
19:15 ... Magazine — Paul Pas Revier  
19:30 ... News Headlines  
19:35 ... Major Dad  
20:00 ... Doc — The Stamp of Greatness  
20:15 ... Drama — Hawaii Five-O  
21:10 ... Drama — A Fine Romance (Ep. 1)  
22:25 ... Doc — A Journey Across the Land of Islam  
22:45 ... Feature film: "In a Stranger's Hand"  
23:50 ... Mando FBI

#### PRAYER TIMES

06:05 ... Fajr  
06:24 ... Sunrise  
11:49 ... Dhuhr  
14:48 ... Asr  
17:14 ... Maghrib

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swedish, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terrence Church Tel. 622366  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.  
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.  
American Catholic Church Tel. 771331.  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.  
American International Church Tel. 652526.  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 65457.  
The Little Day Saints Tel. 654932  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

#### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.  
Relative cold weather conditions will prevail with skies cloudy to partly cloudy and winds north-

### JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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#### ALQUds pharmacy

ZARQA:  
Dr. Walid Halahab ..... 982799  
Khalifeh pharmacy ..... 985417  
Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 630341  
Fire Brigade ..... 61701  
Blood Bank ..... 775121  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 696390  
Public Security Department ..... 63031  
Hotel Complaints ..... 651880  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Water and Sewerage ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality ..... 787111  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone ..... 623101  
Repairs ..... 661101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615  
Electric Power Company ..... 636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53200

#### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111  
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#### QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200. 5, where it should always be verified.  
ARRIVALS  
Royal Jordanian (RJ)  
Flights (Terminal 1)  
05:15 ... Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)  
09:00 ... Damascus (RJ)  
09:00 ... Athens, Beirut (RJ)  
09:20 ... New Delhi (RJ)  
09:25 ... Karachi, Dubai (RJ)  
10:05 ... Beirut (RJ)  
10:20 ... Colombo (RJ)  
12:00 ... Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
14:05 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
15:25 ... London, Berlin (RJ)  
17:55 ... Vienna (RJ)  
23:25 ... Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)  
Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
12:48 ... Bahrain, Doha (GF)  
14:30 ... Rome (AZ)  
15:00 ... Vienna (OS)  
18:15 ... Dubai (EK)  
20:10 ... Beirut (ME)  
20:40 ... Paris, Damascus (AF)  
22:05 ... Athens, Beirut (RJ)  
22:35 ... Athens, Beirut (RJ)  
22:45 ... Athens, Beirut (RJ)  
01:15 ... London, Damascus (BA)  
HUIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN  
Dep. Amman ... 8:00 a.m. every Monday  
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday  
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday  
Arr. Amman ... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday  
MARKET PRICES  
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.  
Apple ..... 700/500  
Banana ..... 630/300  
Banana (Mukammal) ..... 560/500  
Banana (imported) ..... 800/600  
Cabbage ..... 70/50  
Carrot ..... 200/120  
Cauliflower ..... 150/100  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 200/120  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 50/20  
Eggplant ..... 200/120  
Garlic ..... 100/800  
Grape Fruit ..... 300/120  
Lemon ..... 330/220  
Marrow (large) ..... 150/100  
Marrow (small) ..... 140/100  
Onion (green) ..... 220/150  
Onion (dry) ..... 60/450  
Pepper (hot) ..... 500/400  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 500/400  
Potato ..... 200/140  
Radish ..... 170/100  
String Beans ..... 700/500  
Spanish ..... 180/120  
Tomato ..... 140/90

#### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/322  
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6  
Akilch Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Malbus, J. Amman ..... 630140  
Palestine, Shmeissal ..... 67071  
Shmeissal Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 845845  
Al-Muasher Hospital ..... 667227/9  
The Islamic, Andali ..... 666127/57  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 6641440  
Italian, Al-Muhajreh ..... 777101/2  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ..... 771111/2  
Army, Marfa ..... 891611/5  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 602405/50  
Amal Hospital ..... 674155  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ..... 865199  
ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... 6000000  
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)98132  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... (09)99990  
IBRD:  
Prince Basma Hospital ..... (02)27555  
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)27275  
The Al Nafoes Hospital ..... (02)247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

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17:55 ... Vienna (RJ)  
23:25 ... Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)  
Other Flights (Terminal 2)  
12:48 ... Bahrain, Doha (GF)<





AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein joins the Royal Guard's officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers in attending Friday prayer which was held at the Royal Guard mosque. The King and worshippers listened to the Friday sermon which focused on the values of fasting. The armed forces Mufti, Sheikh Mahmoud Shurwayat who delivered the sermon, called on Muslims to visit and help each other and to follow the example of King Hussein who is keen to be amongst his people and to look after their interests, in addition to working tirelessly to unite Arab fold. Also attending the prayer were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Speakers of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and Sa'd Hayel Srou, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasbi, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zaid, Private Chamberlain Prince Ali Ben Nayef, Princes Zaid and Mir'ad, sons of Prince Ra'd Ben Zaid, King Hussein's advisors, and senior civil and military officials (Petra photo)

## 'Building construction plans to come under new scrutiny'

AMMAN (Petra) — A special technical committee at the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) has been charged with inspecting all building construction plans and designs to assure that they fully comply with building code requirements and conditions, according to a decision by the National Jordanian Building Board (NJBB).

The committee, following a board meeting chaired by Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour Thursday, said a statement.

The NJBB members group the ministers of Energy and Mineral Resources and Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, as well as the RSS president, the Housing and Urban Development Department director, the dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Jordan, the Ministry of Public Works secretary general and his assistant for laboratory testing of building materials.

## Hammad accuses Arab Human Rights Organisation of mounting media campaign against him

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad has accused the Jordan chapter of the Arab Human Rights Organisation (AHRO) of mounting a media campaign against him and criticised it for denying that it had prepared its annual report on the human rights situation in Jordan.

The minister said the report that the organisation described as a draft turned out to be a final report. He noted that his ministry had prepared its reply to the report and requested the Foreign Ministry to circulate the reply to regional and international organisations concerned with human rights.

In his reply to AHRO's report about alleged human rights violations in Jordan, Mr. Hammad described the document as lacking accuracy and objectivity.

In response to the interior minister's statement last week, AHRO's Vice-President Labib Kamhawi said at a press conference held

Sunday that the organisation's report was 100 per cent correct, and that Mr. Hammad's statements were full of falsehoods and contrary to the truth in every respect.

Referring to some points included in AHRO's report, Mr. Hammad said a statement by Rima Shbeilat, wife of Jordan Engineers Association President Laith Shbeilat who is being tried on charges of slandering Their Majesties the King and the Queen, was incorrect. He said her claim that the prosecutor general had ordered her son Farhan to be taken as hostage until his father turned himself in was baseless and that the prosecutor general was only asking all those present in Mr. Shbeilat's house about the JEA president's whereabouts. "The mere question about him does not constitute a violation of the law nor does it constitute an attempt to take his son as a hostage," the interior minister said.

accusations made by Imad Matar, brother of Ahmad Matar who was killed when he refused to stop his car at police orders, that he stated that the car driven by the late Matar was carrying narcotics. He said that he had only said that the patrol leader received information that the car was suspected and was wanted by police-men. When Mr. Matar was asked to stop by a policeman he refused and attempted to escape in the car, Mr. Hammad said.

The minister added that charges that some of the defendants who were cleared of sedition charges in the Muta case were never allowed to return to the university were baseless. He said all of them resumed their study at the civil wing of the Muta University and that some of them completed their study and others are still enrolled at the university. All their identity cards and passports were given back to them, he asserted.

## Women volunteers, ministry offer free iftars to the needy

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Women volunteers and the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs are organising charity campaigns aimed at offering free iftars (fast-breaking meals) for underprivileged families during the Holy month of Ramadan.

The iftars, financed from Zakat (alms for the poor) offered by Muslims, are taking place in mosques and other locations around the Kingdom. "A large number of well-off Jordanian families like to give out their Zakat during this month," said Hanan Touqan, one of the organisers. Ms. Touqan, mother of the late Queen Alia, added that families were not sure where to send their money, but with the new charity drive they can send food, every Monday and Thursday during Ramadan to the Ras Al Ain area in Amman to feed a large number of needy families.

The drive, which started in the last three days of Ramadan in 1995, was able to offer free meals to about 6,000 needy individuals at the Al Hussein Mosque in

downtown Amman.

This year's campaign is expected to offer free meals for more than 4,800 people. Ms. Touqan said she hopes to organise iftars every day during the month of Ramadan next year.

"We hope that next Ramadan we could provide meals during the whole month, especially that a large number of Jordanian families expressed interest in contributing to the campaign," Ms. Touqan said, thanking the Greater Amman Municipality for preparing a site for hosting the iftars.

According to Islamic Sharia, every Muslim should pay 2.5 per cent of his/her savings in case they exceed JD 400 for a zakat fund or directly to the poor.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and the Zakat Fund, which helps underprivileged families and orphans, are also organising a similar campaign, offering free iftar meals for needy families at mosques all over the Kingdom.

Last year, the event was limited to Amman and Zarqa, Jordan's largest cities.

## Japan supports women development projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government of Japan has decided to support two projects which will be carried out by Nippon International Cooperation for Community Development (NIC-COD), a Japanese NGO (non-governmental organisation), in cooperation with the Jordanian NGOs, namely, the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) and the Queen Ali Fund for Social Development (QAF), within the framework of Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GAGP).

One of NICCOD's two projects, which will be implemented in collaboration with BPWC and also with United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), aims at establishing the Business Incubator, where women who want to start business, or women entrepreneurs, can take a lease of office space, participate in various management training courses and obtain business information. The grant of up to \$78,651 through this GAGP programme is expected to be used to purchase office machinery which will be placed in this office space.

The other project of NICCOD aims at providing QAF with high-quality wool, which will be purchased by this GAGP assistance worth \$2,944. The wool is expected to be used to improve the quality of products such as sweaters made at QAF's centre in Taif, where vocational training courses are held to develop the life of women living in poverty.

Grant contracts to these effects were signed Feb. 1, 1996, between Mr. Hajime Tanaka, charge d'affaires ad interim of Japan, and Mr. Takashi Mitsuie, executive manager, Middle East section, International Project Department of NICCOD.

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## JEDCO prepares for Jordan week in Qatar

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) is preparing for Jordan Week in Qatar next month with a mix of commercial and artistic exhibitions meant to highlight the Kingdom's progress in various spheres, including agriculture, culture, tourism and trade.

According to JEDCO Assistant Director Farouk Hadidi, the event should also work to strengthen Jordanian-Qatari cooperation in several fields.

The week-long activities are organised by JEDCO

and Qatar's Al Maraya Company in cooperation with the Jordanian embassy in Doha.

The private sectors in both countries plan a comprehensive exhibition of Jordanian industrial and agricultural products, seminars to explain investment opportunities in the two regions as well as a poetry and arts festival.

As part of the festival, Jordanian and Qatari groups will hold art exhibitions, the Royal Jordanian (RJ) Folklore troupe will present its traditional song and dance performances, and the Jordanian Olympic

team will stage sports events in cooperation with Qatari sports and youth centres.

The Amman and Qatari chambers of commerce and industry will hold investment seminars to highlight trade relations between the two countries, Mr. Hadidi said.

Following a related meeting Thursday at the Amman Chamber of Industry, Mr. Hadidi said surveys indicate that there are many potential areas for bilateral trade and excellent opportunities for exporting industrial products to Qatar.

## Shbeilat says he is not guilty, wants more time for his lawyers

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — President of the Jordan Engineers Association Laith Shbeilat said on Thursday he was not guilty of lese majeste charges and called on the State Security Court to give his lawyers more time to examine documents presented by the prosecution.

Mr. Shbeilat, who was detained on Dec. 9 for slander charges against Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor and Crown Prince Hassan, said in Thursday's session that his lectures — on which the

charges were based — were delivered in Irbid, Ajloun, Kafarjah and Taif, as well as at the Amman Cultural Forum but that he needed to examine the prosecution copies of the lectures before he makes his testimony.

"The court is aware that every word (said) in the lecture is important, therefore I have to compare the lecture (presented by the prosecution) with the actual lectures that I delivered," Mr. Shbeilat said.

One of Mr. Shbeilat's lawyers, Ahmad Najdawi, made a request before the court, formed of three civil

judges, to free his client on bail pointing to the arrival of Eid Al Fitr, the three-day feast marking the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan, in two weeks.

The court adjourned the session until Wednesday.

The charges against Mr. Shbeilat carry a maximum sentence of three years.

Mr. Shbeilat, who has been sentenced to 20 years in 1992 for sedition but was released following a royal pardon the same month, is also running for the JEA presidency for another term. The engineers elections will be held next Friday.

## Anti-peace coalition elects chief, forms panels to fight normalisation

AMMAN (AP) — A coalition of 10 hardline groups opposed to peace with Israel Thursday elected its first chief and formed eight committees to work against normalising ties with the Jewish state.

Ishaq Farhan, secretary general of the fundamentalist Islamic Action Front, was named head of a 28-member executive committee of the coalition, which was formed shortly after Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel Oct. 26, 1994.

Faraj Tumezeh, a member of the new executive committee, said Farhan's election came during a three-

hour meeting at the Islamic front's headquarters in Amman.

"We also formed eight committees which will fight all forms of normalisation with the Jews," he said.

He said the most prominent of these will deal with legal, cultural, information and financial matters.

The coalition for protecting the homeland and fighting normalisation of ties with Israel comprises groups with diverse ideologies, ranging from communism to Arab nationalism and Muslim fundamentalism.

The Arab nationalists,

like the communists, regard the U.S.-backed Middle East peace process as heavily biased in Israel's favour. The fundamentalists vehemently oppose any settlement with Israel and advocate its elimination.

Since the coalition was formed, it has confined its opposition of the government's peace policy to a propaganda campaign supported by some of its representatives in parliament.

At a public gathering last year, the coalition vowed to wreck the peace treaty and urged Jordanians not to normalise ties with Israelis.

## Integrating blind students into regular school system requires support, say experts

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's Education Law requires that at the age of 16, a blind child to be transferred to a regular private or public school after spending the previous 10 years at special education schools.

The intention of the law is to integrate such students into the mainstream educational system in order to bring them into "real-life" situations and thus adapt to an early stage.

But some experts in special education say that this sudden integration can negatively affect a blind child's psychological condition and therefore his/her education, especially when these students enrol in schools which lack basic integration facilities.

The students, stress the experts, still require special educational facilities and guidance, particularly because the majority of their families cannot help them with their education.

Wael Massoud, headmaster of the Noor School for the Blind, told the Jordan Times that to accommodate blind students, schools must make environmental

adjustments to ensure these students' free movement, hire a special teacher who knows Braille and encourage a minimum of psychological support from the blind students' sighted classmates and teachers.

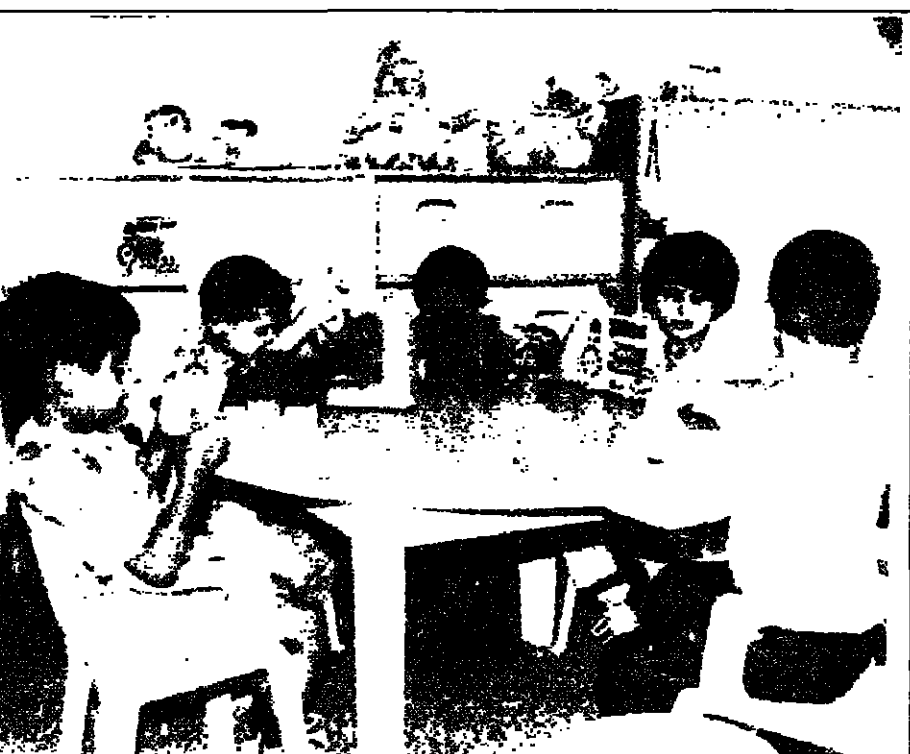
Dr. Massoud, who holds a Ph.D. in special education and integration, stressed that he was not against integration, but that these schools should have a readjustment programme to help blind students cope with their new environment.

"Some students are welcomed by their sighted colleagues and teachers," said Dr. Massoud.

He added that in these rare cases the students "continue their high school education and make it." The others, he said, "unfortunately drop out of school."

Bahijah Hamdan, headmistress of the Islamic School for the Blind (ISB) supported Dr. Massoud's point.

She cited the example of one blind student who had to leave the ISB to attend classes at a public school. This student, Ms. Hamdan said, was still boarding at the ISB, away from her



Blind children play with educational aids at a kindergarten for the blind operated by the Friendship Association for the Blind (file photo)

family, in order for the school's Braille teacher to continue to help her.

The solution to the problem, demanded parents of blind students, is to appoint a visiting Braille teacher

who would be assigned to several schools in the same district.

They said that they have already asked the Ministry of Education to appoint a Braille teacher at these

schools, but that the ministry has not yet responded.

Dr. Massoud said these teachers would solve the problem and provide psychological support to the students.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### PLAY/CONCERT

\* "Ramadan Supermarket" (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. and a concert by Al Hannounah Band for Popular Art at 8:00 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Printmaking and paintings by Jordanian artist Yasser Dweik at Darut Al Funun, Jabal Luweibdeh. Also displaying paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists (until Feb. 18).

\* Plastic (abstract) art exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (until Feb. 6).

\* Paintings by Amer Bani Yassin — "A Moment of Dream." At the Housing Bank Complex (until Feb. 5).



# Chirac, Clinton agree on NATO, nuclear test ban

WASHINGTON (R) — The leaders of France and the United States voiced harmony Thursday on the future of NATO and efforts to achieve a total nuclear test ban, and President Bill Clinton vowed to fight isolationism in America.

At a joint news conference after talks with President Jacques Chirac, Mr. Clinton praised France's decision to end its nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific and pledged to work with Paris to achieve a global test ban this year.

He also hailed Mr. Chirac's decision to move closer to NATO's military organization three decades after General Charles De Gaulle pulled out of the U.S.-dominated integrated command.

Mr. Clinton responded positively to the two main themes Mr. Chirac spelled out in an address to Congress — an appeal for a reform of NATO to give the Europeans a greater role, and a plea for Washington to remain engaged in the world and pay a bigger share of the cost of development aid.

"I believe one of my most important jobs is to try to persuade Americans of both parties not to return to isolationism, not to abandon our responsibilities to international development," Mr. Clinton said.

"I want America to be Europe's partner for peace and democracy and freedom without regard to which party is dominating our politics here," he said.

Mr. Chirac earlier referred obliquely to the budget battle between the Republican majority in Congress and the Democratic president.

He told a joint meeting of Congress: "Our difficulties should not divert us from our obligations towards the poorest countries. Today as in the past, the world needs the United States."

It was ironic that a French president who claims De Gaulle as his political mentor should appeal to the United States to stay in Europe and play a strong global role.

However, Mr. Chirac tempered his call by urging Washington to accept an adaptation of the Atlantic alliance, to be crowned by the adoption of a new

"trans-Atlantic charter," giving the Europeans a bigger role in their own defence.

"Our common action in Bosnia emphasises the need for the alliance to adapt itself to a universe that is no longer that in which it was born," the French leader said.

He also took a swipe at Washington's contribution to development aid, noting that the world's only superpower spent less than one-third of the amount donated by the European Union, which has a comparable-sized economy.

Mr. Clinton said he welcomed French efforts to build a stronger European defence identity within NATO, which would allow the Europeans to deal more effectively with future security problems.

But he stressed that reform must "preserve the basic structure of NATO," suggesting Washington did not share France's view that the U.S.-led allied military command and defence planning system was now obsolete.

Mr. Clinton also said NATO would move steadily

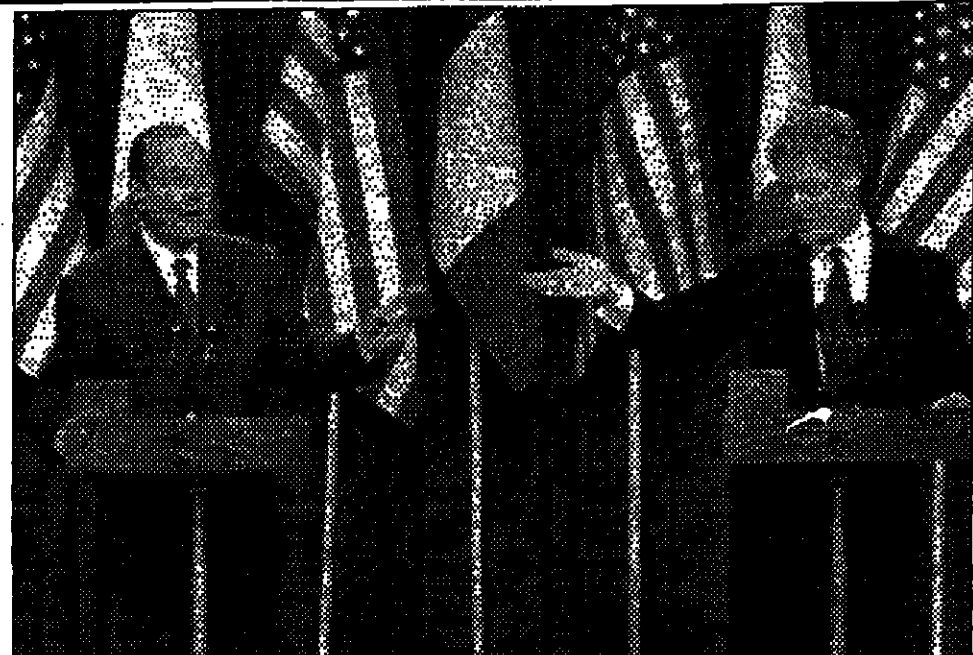
towards eastward enlargement while building a cooperative relationship with Russia, which bitterly opposes extending the alliance's borders to the frontiers of the former Soviet Union.

Most senators and congressmen stayed away from Mr. Chirac's address. Many were out of town campaigning for next November's elections but some Democrats said they boycotted the French leader in protest at French nuclear testing.

Mr. Clinton went out of his way to express admiration for Mr. Chirac, despite occasionally prickly relations between Washington and Paris, and to praise France's role in the NATO peacekeeping operation in Bosnia.

Mr. Chirac, who was scheduled to fly to Chicago Friday morning, decided instead to leave around 12:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) after a White House state dinner to avoid a snow storm headed for Washington, a White House official said.

He was expected to return to Paris on Friday night.



President Bill Clinton (right) and French President Jacques Chirac gesture towards each other during a joint news conference at the Old Executive Office Building in Washington Thursday. Mr. Clinton welcomed France's decision to end nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific and pledged to work with Mr. Chirac for a ban on all future tests (Reuters photo)

## Mid-air collision averted in U.S.

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (R) — A mid-air collision between a USAir passenger jet and a single-engine airplane was averted when a controller radioed the USAir pilot to climb and turn as both planes came within 55 metres of each other, an air traffic official said Thursday.

The two airplanes, a Cessna 182 and a DC9, came within about half the length of a football field of each other Wednesday after the smaller plane took off the wrong way, said Eric Harrell, air traffic control tower manager at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport in North Carolina.

The Cessna 182 was cleared for takeoff but the pilot turned the plane left instead of right, taking it into the path of USAir Flight 365, Mr. Harrell told Reuters.

"The Cessna was given the clear (for takeoff) and advised of traffic on a 5 kilometre final approach. That traffic was the

USAir DC9," Mr. Harrell said.

A quick-thinking pilot of another USAir plane on the ground saw the smaller plane make the wrong turn and radioed the controller about the problem. The USAir flight in the air was immediately instructed to climb and turn to avoid a collision.

"Had the (USAir) pilot not alerted the controllers and had the controller not reacted quickly and on blind trust — instead of questioning her — who knows what would have happened," controller Dale Wright told the Charlotte Observer newspaper.

The Federal Aviation Administration was investigating the incident. "Someone has to talk to that pilot in the Cessna to find out why," Mr. Harrell said.

FAA rules require that planes be separated either by 304 metres vertically or 4.8 kilometres horizontally in controlled airspace.

## Nicaragua students demand release of protesters; 35 out of 107 set free

MANAGUA (AFP) — Hundreds of students surrounded National Police Headquarters here Thursday to demand the release of protesters just minutes before the government announced 35 of them would be set free.

Some 700 students protested the arrest Wednesday of 107 university students, part of an estimated 300 that occupied the Foreign Ministry Tuesday demanding more funds for public universities.

Students gathered outside police headquarters chanting "freedom, freedom!" as a heavy police contingent stood by.

Police Chief Fernando Caldera soon announced that 35 of the detainees would be released following negotiations with the government and university authorities.

The students that were to be freed had a "lesser degree of involvement" in the ministry occupation, during which two ambassadors and 200 ministry officials were held hostage.

Another three students were released from police custody after it was shown that they had not participated in the unrest, the police chief said.

Talks continued Thursday between representatives of public universities and the government of Violeta Chamorro about the students.

Ernesto Medina, president of the National

Council of Universities, called for all the students to be released without delay.

Chief Caldera said negotiations would continue, although he said police would have to file charges against the students within 48 hours of their detention.

At the protest, students remained calm. "We are having a peaceful protest because we don't want more violence," student leader Marcos Medina told AFP. "We want the students to be released and the university budgets improved."

Tensions were high in Managua after police stormed the Foreign Ministry Wednesday morning to end the 12-hour student occupation and students nabbed 15 police officers later that day, holding them for 30 minutes at the university engineering school here.

The unrest comes just days before a visit by Pope John Paul II on Feb. 7.

The students, who said they would continue demonstrating until all students are released, have been protesting regularly to try to press the government to earmark six per cent of the budget for public universities.

The Nicaraguan constitution calls for the six per cent for public universities but it is unclear whether this should be a percentage of the current accounts or of all government income, including foreign funding.

## Australian opposition lashes back at Keating on Asia

CANBERRA (R) — Australia's opposition leader John Howard lashed back Friday at Prime Minister Paul Keating's claim that Asian leaders would not deal with him if he wins March 2 polls and said the Labour leader is suffering delusions of grandeur.

But Mr. Keating, struggling to claw back the opposition's hefty opinion poll lead, continued his personal attack on Mr. Howard by saying that his snubbing of a Vietnamese leader last year made it hard for him to spearhead Australia's push into Asia.

Mr. Howard dismissed Mr. Keating's latest tirade. "All those signs of arrogance, of having being in power for too long, of having lost contact with reality, have emerged over the last 13 years," he told a gathering of party supporters in Brisbane.

"It's therefore not surprising that we have seen some rather erratic behaviour from the prime minister this week," said Mr. Howard, who leads a coalition of the conservative Liberal and National parties.

"These delusions of international grandeur, they appear to overtake

people when perhaps there's a perception that all else has failed."

Mr. Keating said Thursday that Asian leaders would not deal with Mr. Howard because, he said, the opposition leader had not shown the same commitment to the region as he had in recent years.

He went further Friday by saying Mr. Howard would be unable to lead Australia through a window of opportunity to closer trading ties with the economic powerhouses of Asia.

Mr. Keating pointed to an incident last year when he said Mr. Howard, his coalition deputy leader and his foreign affairs spokesman all refused to meet Vietnam's Communist Party General-Secretary Do Muoi when he visited Australia because of human rights concerns.

"You can't snub Asian leaders and carry on as business as usual and say 'I didn't really mean that, I want you to take me seriously now'," Mr. Keating said.

Mr. Keating's first campaign television advertisement focused on his own leadership abilities and his efforts in recent years to boost trade and other ties with Asia.

Mr. Keating has focused on leadership qualities, particularly in the Asian push, because Mr. Howard is proposing little in the way of radical economic and tax reform to attack political analysts say.

In the 1993 election campaign Mr. Keating overcame a similar opinion poll gap by attacking the conservative's proposals then for a consumption tax and sweeping labour and health reforms.

The opposition has dropped almost all of these controversial proposals, preferring instead to appeal to voters for a change after 13 years of Labour rule.

This refusal to risk turning off voters with reform proposals appears to be paying off for Mr. Howard's coalition in the polls where it leads Labour by over eight percentage points.

Mr. Howard's largely positive media coverage in the first week of the campaign has at least impressed an Australian betting agency, Centrebet, which has strengthened its odds for victory from 1-2 on to 2-5 on in the last week.

## President Clinton vows to campaign for Democrats

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton Thursday rejected Republican criticism that he makes conservative-sounding speeches but governs as a liberal.

"I think that's self-evidently not true," Mr. Clinton said at a news conference with visiting French President Jacques Chirac.

Senate majority leader Bob Dole, seeking the Republican presidential nomination, and other leaders of his party have charged that Mr. Clinton "talks right but governs left."

As evidence, they say he made conservative themes the subject of his State of the Union address last week but insist that in practice he favours an intrusive federal government.

Mr. Clinton said with a chuckle that "it depends on how you define the left" as far as Republicans are concerned, he said. "I'm still a little to the left of Anita the Hun, I guess."

The president has put off the official announcement of his candidacy until the spring, but on Friday he goes to New Hampshire, which holds the first presidential primary on Feb. 20, and is to visit another important state, Iowa, next weekend.

When asked if he was trying to have it both ways by travelling to these key states while not yet officially a candidate, Mr. Clinton laughed and shrugged. "Sure. Doesn't everybody?"

But he added in a serious vein: "I believe that I can present myself to the American people as a candidate, without completely undermining my ability to do my job, and that's what I'm going to try to do."

"But it would be inappropriate for me not to go to New Hampshire and Iowa ... I think they're entitled to see the president show up there, and I'm going to show up, try to convince them to be for me," he said.

Mr. Clinton insisted he was taken out of context by the Washington Post when he was quoted as saying this week that it was not his business to try to elect members of his own party to Congress.

The comment prompted a political damage control effort by the White House to convince Democrats Mr. Clinton will campaign for as many of them as he can.

"Do I want more Democrats to get elected to Congress? Of course I do. How do I expect it to happen? Not by telling the American people I need it, but by saying here's where we stand, here's what the future is, I hope you will

choose the same choice that I am making," Mr. Clinton said.

Dole dismisses polls. Meanwhile Sen. Dole dismissed the significance of a poll Thursday that showed rival Steve Forbes has taken a solid lead in the key primary state of New Hampshire.

"Well that's another poll. We're not going to worry about polls, we're going to win this race," Sen. Dole told reporters after a campaign appearance with local business owners at an auto dealer's showroom.

Mr. Forbes has the support of 31 per cent of likely Republican and independent New Hampshire primary voters surveyed compared with 22 per cent for Sen. Dole, according to the survey for the Boston Globe and WBZ TV and Radio.

The survey is the second in two weeks to show Mr. Forbes pulling ahead of Sen. Dole in New Hampshire, which will hold its primary on Feb. 20.

A second poll Thursday by the American Research Group more heavily weighted to Republican voters found Sen. Dole still six points ahead of Mr. Forbes but with steadily eroding support.

This daily tracking poll began Sunday when Sen. Dole had 33 per cent of the vote. Since then, he has lost two points every day and now stands at 25 per cent.

Governor Steve Merrill, who enjoys widespread popularity in New Hampshire and is appearing with Sen. Dole at every campaign stop in the state, also rejected suggestions that Sen. Dole's campaign was collapsing.

"I'm not concerned that the senator is slipping at all. I think his support is solid," Mr. Merrill said. "I don't deny that other candidates might be having a bump now or then."

Sen. Dole is sharply attacking Mr. Forbes in television advertisements, but in public appearances he takes jabs at Mr. Forbes' "flat tax" proposal without mentioning the millionaire publisher by name.

"I'm not a rocket scientist, but it occurred to me that there may be some snake oil here someplace," said Sen. Dole, who portrays Mr. Forbes' plans as an effort to help the "super rich."

New Hampshire has not been kind to Sen. Dole's two previous presidential bids. In 1988 he came into the state off a win in the Iowa caucuses only to have his campaign collapse when George Bush scored a solid victory here.



Antonio Maccanico, 71, named Italy's prime minister-designate, leaves President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro's office following his appointment Thursday. Mr. Maccanico, who has a reputation as a skilled mediator, pledged to work to reach an ambitious deal on radical reform among Italy's rival political blocs as the centrepiece of his government, the 55th since World War II (Reuters photo)

## Italy's premier-designate faces a tough task

ROME (R) — Antonio Maccanico, the veteran politician named Thursday to try to form the 55th Italian government since World War II, faces a task likely to test even his reputed negotiating skills.

Leaders across the political spectrum praised the former minister's experience and competence but warned that he could struggle to secure a landmark "stability pact" among Italy's squabbling parties.

"Maccanico certainly has the experience to tackle such a difficult situation. But personal merits don't always suffice," Antonio Martino, foreign minister in former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's government, told reporters.

"He's a good choice, but it would be superficial and naive to think it's all downhill from here," added Giulio Urbani, also a minister in media magnate Berlusconi's government.

Mr. Maccanico, 71, was due to start talks with political forces on forming a new government Friday.

He told reporters after receiving his mandate from President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro that success would depend on accord between Italy's main political blocs on radical constitutional reforms.

"It is my profound conviction that Italy's vital interests today reside in the formation of a government based on broad parliamentary agreement," the prime minister-designate said.

Italy's main blocs — Mr. Berlusconi's centre-right Freedom Alliance and the centre-left Olive Tree — agree the system of parliament, government and elections must be revised if the country is to secure stability.

Days of deadlock over how to achieve that goal were broken Wednesday when both sides reported progress towards a compromise based on a modified French-style system of direct election of the president and a two-round voting system.

"The condition for this to be born is a serious, solid, broad agreement among the political forces," Mr. Maccanico said, pledging to work for a consensus between the blocs. He said his government would best be left to tackle urgent issues, like getting the lira back into Europe's exchange rate mechanism and lowering inflation, while parliament concentrated on hashing out the reforms.

Financial markets, bellwethers of the country's political rollercoaster, took cheer at the prospect of a new government after three weeks of deep confusion.

## TV appeal leads girl to drop suicide plan

TOKYO (R) — Swift action by authorities may have saved the life of a Japanese schoolgirl who faxed an anonymous suicide note to a television station saying she was going to kill herself because of bullying. The incident Wednesday was a possible new example of a rash of suicides due to bullying which have swept the country in recent months. The drama began when a TV station in Hiroshima in western Japan received an anonymous note saying: "I will die today." The note blamed bullying at a local high school as the reason for the author wanting to die, a spokesman for the Hiroshima Prefecture Education Board said. After the station broadcast the note, alarmed members of the education board rushed to the station and made a televised appeal to the student not to go ahead with the planned suicide. Later, a man claiming to be the anonymous student's father called the board and said he had talked his daughter out of killing herself. There have been no reports of a teenage suicides in the area since the fax was sent, the spokesman said. "We will remain vigilant, but we are glad the worst has not happened," he added.

## Drunken fireman got more than an earful

BOMBAY (AFP) — An inebriated fireman in a town near here bit off one of his chief's earlobes after being told he was in no condition to help fight a blaze, a local newspaper reported. The Marathi-language daily Saanra (Encounter) said Dillip Goond, fire chief in the town of Kalyan, returned to the fire station to summon more firemen to fight a fire. He noticed fireman Dadasaheb Yadav in an inebriated condition and ordered him not to join the fire fighting team, the newspaper said. Mr. Yadav argued with his chief, but Mr. Goond refused to relent, it said. The furious Yadav then bit off Mr. Goond's earlobe. The newspaper said the severed lobe was found but doctors were unable to reattach it to the ear.

## Inverted Nixon stamp sells for \$16,675

NEW YORK (AFP) — A stamp that shows the imprint, "Richard Nixon" upside down on a commemorative stamp for the former president sold for \$16,675 Thursday, the auction house Christie's said. The stamp was first issued on April 26, 1995 and the error was discovered in Virginia. The stamp sold for well above the \$10,000 pre-sale estimate, said Christie's.

## What's that scent? My perfumed knickers...

PARIS (R) — A French lingerie maker is developing perfumed knickers and bras which give off their scent as they rub against the skin — even after six washings, a spokeswoman said Thursday. Groupe Perrin, based in the central city of Lyon and specialising in silk underwear, bathing suits and ready-to-wear women's fashions, has been experimenting with lingerie speckled with microcapsules filled with French perfumes. The minute capsules break open when they rub against the skin, releasing the perfume slowly over time. The scent would be guaranteed to last for at least six washings, spokeswoman Marie Christine Ebner told Reuters. "Microencapsulated" is something one can use on any type of fabric, so any piece of clothing can be scented in this way, Ms. Ebner said.

## Ministry w

TOKYO (R) — Japanese international police officers are concerned about the arrest of six members of the Japanese National Police Agency (NPA) in Myanmar. The officers were arrested on suspicion of involvement in the 1995 Myanmar election fraud. The NPA is a controversial force that has been accused of human rights abuses. The arrest of the officers is part of a larger investigation into the 1995 election. The NPA has been a subject of controversy since its creation in 1992. It has been accused of being a tool of the military and of being involved in human rights abuses. The arrest of the officers is a significant development in the investigation. It shows that the Japanese government is taking a serious interest in the situation in Myanmar. The NPA has been a major player in Myanmar's political life. It has been involved in many of the country's major events. The arrest of the officers is a blow to the NPA. It shows that the Japanese government is not willing to overlook human rights abuses. The NPA has been a source of pride for the Japanese government. It has been seen as a symbol of Japan's commitment to international law. The arrest of the officers is a challenge to the NPA. It shows that the Japanese government is not willing to let the NPA get away with human rights abuses. The NPA has been a major player in Myanmar's political life. It has been involved in many of the country's major events. The arrest of the officers is a significant development in the investigation. It shows that the Japanese government is taking a serious interest in the situation in Myanmar. The NPA has been a source of pride for the Japanese government. It has been seen as a symbol of Japan's commitment to international law. The arrest of the officers is a challenge to the NPA. It shows that the Japanese government is not willing to let the NPA get away with human rights abuses.



## Dynamite flattens China suburb, over 100 feared dead

BEIJING (R) — A dynamite blast has obliterated a central China apartment building and devastated much of its neighbourhood, killing more than 100 residents and injuring hundreds, officials said Friday.

They blamed an illegal explosives store in the basement for the accident Wednesday evening.

"It was terrifying," a rescue coordinator said by telephone from City-South Town, a suburb of Shaoyang city in central Hunan province where the blast hit just after supper time.

"At first we thought it was an earthquake," television footage showed hundreds of soldiers, police and volunteers Wednesday night and Thursday clawing by hand and with hand tools through the rubble of City-South Town.

"The entire street has been levelled," a local television official said by telephone.

All that remained of the five-storey apartment block was a crater 30 metres across and 10 metres deep, the official Hunan Daily reported Friday from Shaoyang.

The official toll stood at 77 dead but was certain to rise above 100 as soldiers pulled bodies from the rubble of several collapsed five-storey buildings, the rescue official said.

"Workers are still digging through the rubble and expect to find more bodies. We do not expect to find more survivors," he told Reuters Friday. "The death toll will rise above 100."

An accounting was made more difficult by the failure of many migrant workers to register their residency, he said.

More than 400 people were injured and 117 were admitted to hospitals in serious condition, the Hunan Daily said.

Anything within 100 metres was flattened, including the homes of 40 families, and windows were shattered within a two kilometre radius, the newspaper said.

"Our offices are a kilometre away, but it blew out all of our windows," the rescue official said.

Provincial experts had

joined an inquiry into what the Hunan Daily called an "extraordinarily serious accident".

The cause was 10 tonnes of military dynamite that a building resident had stored in the basement, where he ran an illegal explosives firm, the newspaper reported.

City officials would not comment on a report, passed to Reuters by a local television executive, that police suspected the blast was set intentionally in an act of revenge.

Investigators were still trying to determine what sparked the blast, which cut water and electricity, they said.

The blast hit the town of 200,000 just before 8.00 p.m., when many Chinese settle in for an evening of television.

Many survivors were crushed and unconscious and suffered broken bones, doctors said. Others were hurt in a rain of bricks, metal and glass or from the sheer force of the blast.

"Most of our patients were either crushed or struck by flying masonry,"

one doctor said.

What were expected to be the last two survivors were extricated late Thursday — 20 hours after the blast.

"They are still unconscious," said a doctor at Number Two People's Hospital, where the two were being treated.

Doctors said they expected few hospital deaths.

"Most of our 80 patients are out of danger," said a doctor at Number One People's Hospital. "Most suffered blast-related injuries to the face, arms and body."

Officials said the dynamite merchant had received a large consignment of explosives in lieu of money from a cash-strapped debtor and stored them illegally in the basement.

It is not uncommon for private mining families in China to store explosives and detonators in their homes, contributing to a nationwide plague of mining accidents.

The region of Hunan is dotted by private mines.



Rescue workers search through the rubble for survivors in City-South Town, a suburb of Shaoyang city in central Hunan province after a dynamite blast obliterated a central China apartment house and much of its neighbourhood. Officials blamed the blast on 10 tonnes of military explosives that a building resident had stored in its basement. More than 100 people are feared dead (Reuters photo)

## Thousands of Rwandans return home

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — The U.N. refugee agency was trucking thousands of Rwandan Hutu refugees in strife-torn Burundi back home Friday as thousands of others tried to cross the Ruvubu River into Tanzania.

Those returning home from the Ntamba Camp in northeastern Burundi were all volunteers, said Hitoshi Misse, the senior representative here of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The unprecedented repatriation came as the UNHCR disclosed plans to close down refugee camps for Rwandan Hutus in both Burundi and Zaire.

Fewer than 90,000 of the two million Hutus who fled to Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania during Rwanda's 1994 civil war have returned to their tiny central African nation, fearing vengeance by the victorious Tutsis for the slaughter by Hutu extremists of more than 500,000 men, women and children.

Mr. Misse said the change of heart by the Ntamba refugees came after a delegation of Rwandan officials visited the camp on Jan. 29 and assured them the innocent would be safe.

He said the UNHCR repatriated 1,725 Rwandans from Ntamba Thursday, and was repatriating another 4,000 or so Friday, the last of them possibly Saturday.

(A UNHCR official said later that 25 trucks, each crammed with around 70 refugees, had left the Ntamba Camp for the border with Rwanda.)

Mr. Misse said 1,600 refugees from the camp crossed over into Tanzania Wednesday and Thursday to join an earlier wave of refugees from Ntamba and the nearby Mugano Camp.

They had been accepted by the Tanzanian authorities and were being registered by UNHCR staff in Tanzania's Ngara region, he said.

He estimated the number of Ntamba refugees on the border with Tanzania, or nearby, Friday at "around 4,000."

Relief workers said they undoubtedly included extremists who if they returned home could expect to join more than 60,000 Hutus being held in overcrowded Rwandan prisons on war-crime charges.

Mr. Misse said a meeting of a tripartite commission of Rwandan, Burundian and UNHCR officials on Jan. 29 decided to close down four other camps in northern Burundi which hold 102,000 Rwandan refugees, trucking volunteers home and consolidating all those that remained in Burundi after Aug. 1 in a new camp deeper

inside the country.

News of that decision came as informed sources said Zaire was believed to be on the brink of starting to close camps in eastern Zaire which house about one million Rwandan Hutu refugees. A commission of Zairean, Rwandan and UNHCR officials decided on Dec. 20 to close those camps progressively.

Mr. Misse said Burundian authorities had discovered that 1,200 residents of the Ntamba Camp were in fact Burundian Hutus who had been living as refugees in Rwanda following previous ethnic clashes here, and had crossed back to Burundi with Rwandan Hutus during the Rwandan civil war.

They were being sent back to their home communities, he said.

The 15,000 Rwandan Hutus living in the Mugano Camp in northeastern Burundi fled for the border with Tanzania on Jan. 18 after a night of fighting at their camp between Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army and Hutu militias.

Tanzania closed its border with Burundi in March last year, saying it was having problems coping with the 700,000 Rwandan and Burundian refugees it was already hosting, but agreed to accept the Mugano refugees on humanitarian grounds.

That led to an exodus of most of the 17,000 refugees in the Mugano Camp, who charged that Burundian soldiers had expelled them — a claim the Burundian government denied.

Several thousand who made it across the river by paying boatmen or swimming were granted asylum, but Tanzanian troops forced thousands of others to return to Burundi.

Mr. Misse said 12,000 returned to Ntamba, where soldiers had meanwhile burned down the refugees' huts.

The ethnic mix in Burundi is the same as in Rwanda before the war there — 85 per cent Hutus, most of whom are peasant farmers, and 14 per cent Tutsis, who control the armed forces, the towns, and big business.

Clashes between soldiers and Hutu militias, along with massacres of villagers, are resulting in an average of 30 people being killed every day, diplomats and relief workers estimate.

The U.N. Security Council last Monday directed Secretary General Boutros Ghali to draw up contingency plans for U.N. intervention if Burundi slides into full-scale civil war, and threatened an arms embargo.

## Gonzalez behind in polls with one month to elections

MADRID (AFP) — Spain's Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, faced with consistently low poll results only one month away from national elections, could lose government after 14 years in power.

The ruling Spanish Workers' Socialist Party (PSOE) has recorded approval ratings seven to 10 per cent lower than their conservative opposition after being beset by ministerial corruption revelations.

Conservative leader of the Popular Party, Jose Maria Aznar, has maintained political heat on Mr. Gonzalez following the indictment of one of his former Socialist ministers on Jan. 16 during an investigation into anti-Basque death squads.

Former Socialist minister, Jose Barrionuevo, provoked a scandal among militants when he subsequently announced his candidacy for elections.

The so-called GAL affair poses a serious threat to Mr. Gonzalez whose charisma has helped win the previous four elections (1982, 1986, 1989, 1993), though by a slightly diminished margin each time.

Mr. Gonzalez's successful six month term as president of the European Union in 1995 helped him to overcome personal doubts of running for a fifth term, and appeared to consolidate his party's popularity going into the elections.

The conservatives have effectively reversed that trend leading up to the March 3 elections.

At the Popular Party conference on Jan. 21, Jose Maria Aznar declared "We are ready, we are going to win. The hour to rise up has arrived."

Mr. Aznar has recently engaged in pointed attacks on Mr. Gonzalez over the GAL affair, although the official election campaign does not begin until Feb. 16.

Close aides said Mr. Gonzalez had questioned the independence of the courts' investigating the anti-terrorist scandal.

Although he publicly denied this, legal circles and political opponents on the left and right denounced him for having made such a suggestion.

Mr. Aznar has indicated that he would like to bury the GAL scandal should he win power. He has also since back-tracked but the Socialists are convinced the PP is exploiting the GAL affair for electoral purposes.

## U.S. says China 'very displeased' by Taiwan visa

WASHINGTON (R) — The response of the United States government is, we think this is a routine matter," Mr. Burns said. "It's nothing to be concerned about and it should not affect our relationship with the People's Republic of China."

Mr. Li will be allowed to make a total of four brief stops on U.S. soil — in San Francisco, twice in Miami en route to and from stops in Haiti and El Salvador, and in Los Angeles — but will not engage in any public activity, Mr. Burns said.

While Mr. Li is free to go

sightseeing, have a meal in a restaurant and stay in a hotel while in transit in the United States, Mr. Burns said he must keep a low profile.

"He cannot hold public meetings. He cannot stand up in the middle of a park and give a speech. We certainly don't want to see any interviews on television," he said. "I think the Taiwanese authorities are very clear about our wishes in granting this transit visa — no public activities."

This transit visa is the second granted to Mr. Li in two

months the last one was granted so he could visit Guatemala in early January.

The United States downgraded ties with Taipei in 1979 after recognising Beijing. But powerful pro-Taiwan sentiment in Congress pushed President Bill Clinton to allow a private U.S. visit last June by Taiwan's President Lee Teng-Hui.

That trip infuriated Beijing and has soured bilateral relations.

## Sinn Fein official warns of return to violence

DAVOS, Switzerland (Agencies) — A Sinn Fein leader refused Friday to rule out his party's participation in all-party Northern Ireland elections, but hinted at the possibility of a return to violence if the current deadlock is not resolved.

Michael McLaughlin, national chairman of the Sinn Fein political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), said in the absence of political progress, "conditions for conflict which still exist in Ireland will re-assess themselves."

He told a press conference at the World Economic Forum (WEF) here that his party had not yet taken a "definitive position" on participation in elections.

He said the decision would depend on negotiations, but also possibly elaborations on the proposals, made by British Prime Minister John Major last month and firmly rejected by Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams.

"We're watching with great interest the discussions between the Irish government and the British government," Mr. McLaughlin said, adding that if changes were made to the election proposals Sinn Fein would consider them.

"The British government had a meeting this week with John Hume's party the SDLP, and they gave a promise to provide an elaboration of the election proposals," he said.

"If there are variations, then clearly Sinn Fein would await the detail before taking a definitive position."

Mr. McLaughlin said that Mr. Major's proposal for elections "would be viewed by many as yet another precondition to dialogue," describing it as "another serious setback to the peace process."

And he warned: "Unless we demonstrate movement forward in the political process, inevitably those conditions for conflict which still exist in Ireland will re-assess themselves."

His comments came ahead of a session Friday afternoon to be attended by key players in the peace process — including Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew, Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) leader John Hume, and David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party.

The Sinn Fein leader pointed out that such a meeting, at which the participants will explain their positions but not necessarily talk, was not possible in Ireland.

"It is quite a remarkable achievement ... such a meeting across the political spectrum has so far eluded the peace process in Ireland," he told reporters.

Meanwhile President Bill Clinton, in a meeting Thursday

with Mr. Adams, stressed the need for "rapid progress" toward all-party peace talks in Northern Ireland.

Aides said neither Mr. Clinton nor Mr. Clinton's national security adviser, Anthony Lake, pressured Mr. Adams to accept a British proposal for elections ahead of the talks.

Mr. Adams had talks for two hours over lunch with Mr. Lake and Mr. Clinton joined in part of the meeting.

"The president underscored the need for rapid progress to all-party talks," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said in a statement after the meeting. "He encouraged all parties to remain committed to the search for peace and determined in its pursuit."

Mr. Lake escorted Mr. Adams to reporters waiting outside the White House. Mr. Lake said he and Mr. Adams had "very useful talks about how to move as quickly forward as possible" to get into talks among all parties in the Northern Ireland dispute.

Mr. Adams told reporters he outlined his view of how to advance the peace process to all-party talks.

He said he was "not at all" pressured by the White House to accept the British proposal and insisted the next move is up to Mr. Major.

On Thursday, Britain and Ireland failed to resolve a damaging row over how to bring about peace talks to cement a 16-month-old ceasefire in Northern Ireland.

Talks in London between Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, and Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring were the first since Prime Minister Major infuriated the Irish government last week by unilaterally proposing elections as a way to advance the stalled peace process.

Asked whether Thursday's meeting had narrowed differences over the election plan for the province, Mr. Spring told a news conference: "No... The reservations obviously still remain."

But Mr. Spring said he was prepared to continue discussions and would meet Sir Patrick again in Dublin next Wednesday. Ireland, Britain's partner in the search for peace, wants London to agree to convene all-party peace talks by the end of February.

Sir Patrick said Britain remained committed to elections despite the critical reception to the idea from Republicans.

Asked whether the government had dropped its election plan during Thursday's talks, Sir Patrick told a news conference held immediately after Mr. Spring's: "Certainly not."

## 2 people die in U.S. train derailment

LOS ANGELES (R) — Two people were killed when a freight train carrying hazardous chemicals derailed and caught fire about 80 kilometres east of Los Angeles Thursday, officials said.

The fire sent up a huge toxic cloud and businesses, homes and a motel in an 800 sq. metre area were evacuated and roads through the area were closed.

Officials from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Company, operators of the train, said two bodies were recovered from the wreckage but declined to confirm they were the bodies of two missing crew members.

Police and fire officials had previously said a conductor and a brakeman were missing. The train's engineer was taken to hospital with back problems after being rescued.

Earlier, Bill Peters, an official with the California Department of Forestry, said a crew wearing protective clothing had inspected the burning train — 46 of the 49 cars burst into flames when it left the tracks — but had not found the missing men.

They had determined, however, that the site was too dangerous for firemen to tackle the flames.

special hazardous material team were forced to stay half a mile from the crash site because of the toxic fumes. Despite the precautions, 11 police officers were taken to a hospital in nearby Victorville with breathing problems.

A railroad spokesman said they were awaiting an autopsy report before confirming that the bodies were those of the missing crew members.

The train, which officials said was carrying several different toxic chemicals, including trimethyl phosphate, derailed before dawn near the town of Devore.

The cause of the derailment, which took place on a steep downgrade in the Cajon Pass, was under investigation.

One of the highways shut down by the derailment was Interstate 15, the main route from Los Angeles to Las Vegas.

A resident of the sparsely populated area, Patrick Davis, told how he and his brother-in-law rescued the injured engineer from the train as it was becoming engulfed in flames.

"His back was hurt. He was crawling out of the window of the cab. We pulled him down and pulled him away from the flames," he said.

## Amnesty worried about jailed Burmese

BANGKOK (R) — Amnesty International said it was concerned about the well-being of six members of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) party arrested in Burma last month.

The international human rights organisation said in a statement received in Bangkok Friday the six men were detained apparently for having written a poem commemorating the 1991 death in custody of former opposition leader Tin Maung Win.

"Amnesty International is gravely concerned for the well-being of six men arrested on Jan. 27, 1996, in Rangoon by Military Intelligence Unit 6," the statement said.

"Their arrests form part of the continuing crackdown, begun in mid-December 1995, against members and supporters of the NLD, Myanmar's (Burma's) leading opposition party, founded in 1988 by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi."

Amnesty said dozens had been arrested for peaceful

political activities, with those detained at risk of torture or ill-treatment which it said was common during interrogation and after sentencing.

"In addition, conditions in Myanmar's prisons fall far short of international minimum standards, with lack of access to proper medical treatment, overcrowding, and insufficient food all serious concerns."

According to the Amnesty statement, the six men held a religious ceremony to mark the Jan. 18 anniversary of Tin Maung Win's death, during which they presented a poem they had written to his family.

"The authorities claimed that U Tin Maung Win, an NLD member arrested in October 1990, died from leukaemia, but unofficial sources suggested that the cause of death was ill-treatment or harsh detention conditions, as there was no prior indication of the disease," Amnesty said.

The six men have not been heard from since their arrest and are believed to be held at the Military Intelligence Unit's head-quarters. They have not been charged, Amnesty said.

Burma's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) took power in 1988 after suppressing a six-month pro-democracy uprising during which thousands of people were killed or wounded and many more imprisoned.

Amnesty said about 2,000 political prisoners, including Ms. Suu Kyi, have been released from jail but hundreds more remained in prison.

Since Ms. Suu Kyi's NLD party in late November withdrew from the SLORC-convened National Convention, which is being held to draw up guidelines for a new constitution, the government has cracked down on NLD members.

Several people have been detained for possessing and distributing videotapes of Ms. Suu Kyi's weekend speeches and others arrested for satirising the SLORC in dance performances, Amnesty said.



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### Consultations for democracy

THE RECENT consultations between the outgoing government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Parliament members on the draft election law have certainly been a step in the right direction but in no way enough towards removing the controversial aspects of the law. The scope of these consultations on this very important piece of legislation should be expanded by the new government to reach other sectors of society including academics, professionals and even lay persons who have a stake in the outcome. Given the fact that the proposed new legislation constitutes the backbone of democracy in any country, and certainly our own, greater and deeper examination of its aims becomes a must.

For starters we have to identify those who in fact drafted the new law in a bid to understand better their ultimate intent. Normally a law of this kind should have been articulated by a select committee composed of theoreticians, jurists, statesmen and other people who may be well-versed in such endeavours. Above all, the task should have been assigned to people who are also familiar with the country's legal obligations under international law.

A first reading of the suggested legislation would readily indicate that awareness of binding international standards in this context was lacking. Three prime examples of deficiencies in the proposed law as far as international jurisprudence is concerned can be offered: The allocation of seats in the Lower House without sufficient regard to the size of population in each and every electoral district. Under international standards, voters are supposed to enjoy equal voting rights by electing the same number of representatives in proportion to their number. This much was not observed in the draft law.

Second, the notion of allocating fixed number of seats to ethnic and religious minorities does not correspond with international norms. Under universally accepted standards, minorities may occupy seats in parliament in numbers not related to their size in the community but rather depending on the popularity of their candidates among the people. There can be no ceiling on the number of their seats just as there can be no minimum seats allotted to them. Assuring a minimum number of representation to less densely populated areas of the country or to minorities has always been done in democratic nations through elections to the Upper House of Parliament which do not have to correspond with population criteria. This is done to ensure fair and adequate representation to all segments of the people.

Third, members of the Armed Forces in all democracies that we know are eligible to cast their votes in general elections. While recognising and appreciating the need to keep our army and security forces apolitical as much as possible, we must begin the process of enabling their members to enjoy their democratic rights, at the top of which is voting.

There are other controversial articles in the draft law that need to be ironed out by a collective effort of the people. The debate that has begun needs to be pressed to the point where there is a law that satisfies the democratic needs of this country.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i described Israel's discarding of blood donated by Ethiopian Jews as an incident that exposed the Jewish state's racist policies. Of course the Ethiopian Jews were outraged at discovering this fact and rebelled against the government, but were treated with brutality - which was another facet of the Israeli discrimination policies against other ethnic groups, said Munes Razzaq. But to make up for this inhuman treatment accorded to the Ethiopian citizens of Israel, Prime Minister Shimon Peres was quick to present his government's apology to the Ethiopian Jewish leaders and to announce the creation of a special committee to investigate this sensitive issue, added the writer. Drawing a contrast between the Israelis and the Arabs, the writer said that while racism is not practised by Arab governments against Arab citizens, Arab leaders and Arab governments do not practise democracy with their people. He said that a prime minister of an Arab country never apologise to his people for many cases of arbitrary and repressive measures practised against them over the past half a century. The writer called on those who call for normalisation with Israel to embark on democratic normalisation within their own state as a first step. He said normalisation should be preceded by steps towards enhancing democracy within the Arab World.

A WRITER for Al Dustour stressed the need for the Iraqi government to embark on any reasonable step that would ensure sufficient food and medical supplies to the people. U.N. Security Council Resolution 986, which allows Iraq to sell oil and buy food and medical supplies should have been accepted from the start especially that the oil is to be sold under U.N. supervision, said Ali Safadi. Regardless of how the Iraqi leadership considers this move, the sale of oil for food and medicine can open a door for the Iraqis to negotiate further steps that eventually will lead to the lifting of the embargo altogether, he argued. It is enough to watch the rejoicing of the Arab people of Iraq upon hearing that negotiations were under way to sell oil to get food and medicine to realise how badly these supplies are needed, noted the writer. He said it must be emphasised that moves to ensure food and medicine for the Iraqi people should take precedence over all other considerations because they guarantee the people's survival.

### Jordanian Perspective

# Changing the PLO charter should prove Arafat's statesmanship

By Dr. Musa Keilani

IT IS difficult to see Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat making good on his promise to Israel that he would amend the clauses in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) charter that imply a call for the elimination of the state of Israel. It is difficult not because Mr. Arafat does not want to, but because of the opposition voices in the Palestinian National Council (PNC), the only body authorised to amend the charter. It is true that a good number of PNC members living in exile and who have criticised the Israel-PLO autonomy accords have expressed willingness to return to the Palestinian territories, in line with an Israeli offer, but it seems unlikely that they would vote for amending the PLO charter if and when a PNC session is convened for that explicit purpose. That leaves Mr. Arafat with the almost impossible situation of advancing the Palestinian quest for statehood through negotiations with Israel since Israel has ruled out any further moves with the PLO until the charter has been amended.

The government of Labour Party leader Shimon Peres in Israel has its own reasons to insist on its demand. For one thing, the PLO's amending the charter would go a long way to remove a key avenue of criticism from the Israeli right-wing, which now argues that it is the only Israeli party capable of achieving an agreement with the Palestinians based on concrete measures on the ground to ensure Israeli "security."

On the Palestinian side, leaders of the so-called hardline factions are continuing to stick to their outdated declarations and positions partly because it suits them politically to do so and partly because they have to please their patron states where they are based. They remain captive to their so-called revolutionary beliefs and are unable or unwilling to accept the reality of the existence of the state of Israel. They are obviously trying to use their adamant refusal to entertain any move to amend the PLO charter as a point of pressure against Mr. Arafat. The veterans of the Palestinian revolution, as they call themselves, cannot but be naive to believe that their position would undermine the peace process launched with the Oslo accords, since it is clear that on the leadership levels of both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide there is an iron-clad commitment to pursue the path of peace regardless of any hurdle.

As such, Mr. Arafat has to find a compromise to honour

his pledge to Israel. One of the means available to the newly elected Palestinian president is to adopt a new charter on its own to replace the PNC covenant. He could do that through the Palestinian self-rule council elected on Jan. 20.

Despite arguments that the council itself is not fully representative of the Palestinian people since only a quarter or so of the Palestinian nation was represented in the elections, the world now recognises the self-rule council as the legitimate assembly of the Palestinian people.

No one can overlook the fact that the council was elected by the people living in the occupied territories under

**"The Israelis cannot simply insist that they would accept nothing short of a total abrogation by the PNC of its own charter. The Israelis should be the first to realise and accept that such a demand is as unrealistic as the demand of the Palestinian opposition groups for the liberation of all of Palestine."**

Israeli rule for nearly three decades. That constituency is the most familiar with the realities of occupation, as well as Israeli policies, among all components of the PNC.

Their perceptions of the situation on the ground are quite different from those who raise political slogans and revolutionary themes from their bases in exile. That is not to downplay the cause of those in exile; they have the right, as any other human being and at par with the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, to demand their rights and secure them. But they have to do so through accepting the realities on the ground, that is the existence of the state of Israel. Those political dinosaurs who simply want to throw a spanner in the works while maintaining defiance against the realities cannot be described as really helping the cause of their people.

The legitimacy of the PNC as the parliament-in-exile of the Palestinian people owes itself to its four-part composi-

tion of representatives of the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, of those living in the diaspora, of elected Palestinian bodies such as professional unions and social organisations and of the factions that make up the PLO.

By and large, it is the first component that elected the self-rule council but it is a foregone conclusion that the electorate largely represented the Palestinian nation. As such, it does have the legitimacy to opt for whatever course it finds fit to advance the Palestinian quest to regain all legitimate rights on Palestinian soil. If that means adopting a new charter to replace the PNC charter, then no one can actually find fault with such a move.

The Israelis cannot simply insist that they would accept nothing short of a total abrogation by the PNC of its own charter. The Israelis should be the first to realise and accept that such a demand is as unrealistic as the demand of the Palestinian opposition groups for the liberation of "all of Palestine." They should also recognise that Mr. Arafat cannot bring a majority of PNC members together to accept changing the charter; not because every member in the PNC is opposed to doing so, but because those who continue to sit on the Palestinian fence at the moment cannot be politically or otherwise satisfied to join the Arafat bandwagon. They have their own demands and priorities which Mr. Arafat is unable to meet under the present circumstances.

That particular segment of the Israeli body politic which has conditioned the continuation of the peace process on amendments to the PLO charter should reconsider itself to accepting a new covenant by the elected Palestinian council. After all, Israel is indeed dealing with the elected council in the peace process and not with those who are living in exile.

The need of today is to push the peace process ahead towards realising the Palestinian goal of statehood. Once that is achieved, the unaddressed grievances of the Palestinian nation, whether inside the occupied territories or outside, could be tackled. The very realisation of this fact should be the guiding factor for Mr. Arafat.

### THE WEEK IN PRINT

## Palestinians, Israel need to compromise to forward the process of peace making

REVIEWED BY  
ELIA NASRALLAH

Over the past week, the local Arabic dailies gave prominence to the situation in the Palestinian lands in the wake of the elections, in addition to Arab affairs and Jordanian domestic issues.

A writer in Al Ra'i daily said that the imminent meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) to discuss changes in the Palestinian national charter is a very significant development in the history of the Palestine problem.

The council's task, which entails scrapping chapters calling for the destruction of Israel, coincides with the imminent commencement of the final phase of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations to discuss the question of refugees, the future of Jerusalem and the Jewish settlements, said Hussein Abu Rummam.

Israel has to realise that it has to commit itself to settling these important issues and to recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, while the PNC has to realise that the charter in its present form does not conform with the requirements of peace, said the writer.

He added that both parties have to compromise in order to reach a final settlement.

In the light of the elections in Palestine, the issue of future relationship and confederation between Jordan and Palestine has once again cropped up, said Mohammad Kawash, a writer for Al Dustour.

Noting that the Palestinians have now liberated themselves from any pressures, the writer said Palestinian leaders can now think freely.

The Palestinians are duty bound to come up with a very reasonable and acceptable formula that can guarantee the rights of the Jordanians as well as of the Palestinians in any future form of unity between the two sides, said the writer.

Indeed, he said, the comprehensive peace which is starting to take shape will no doubt open the door for the Jordanians and the Palestinians to discuss some form of union between them so as to safeguard their common interests.

He said that the challenges of the future make it incumbent on the two sides to embark on such important step.

Mahmoud Rimawi called for urgent Jordanian-Palestinian coordination regarding the coming stage in the peace process which entails the Palestinian leadership's involvement in the final phase of negotiations with Israel.

The writer said that the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty should not prevent the Jordanians and the Palestinians from coordinating their steps towards securing the rights of the Palestinian people and the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

One of the important issues is that of the fate of the Palestinian refugees, a subject of concern to both the Palestinians and the Jordanians since Jordan has been hosting the greatest number of refugees since 1948, noted the writer.

He said that both Jordan and Palestine should insist on the right of the refugees to return, to receive compensation for their lost property and for the Palestinians to establish their own independent state on Palestinian soil.

Saleh Qallab, a columnist for Al Dustour, said that the ruling Labour Party in Israel is currently striving to secure a Syrian-Israeli declaration of principles but not a peace treaty with Syria before the Israeli elections.

The Israeli leaders are afraid that a settlement with Syria, which means the return of the Syrian Golan Heights, could cost them the loss of the coming elections and therefore they are now satisfied with a declaration of principles alone, said the writer.

Indeed, added the writer, the Israelis are in a race against time to achieve that goal at a time when the Syrians are taking it easy, are not showing any interest in rushing things and are not under pressure from any source.

Al Ra'i Arabic daily expressed optimism that the Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations would lead to a final settlement between the two sides, noting the keen interest of the United States to ensure the attainment of that goal.

But the paper said that it should be emphasised that the success of this process entirely depends on Israel's commitment to give back to the Syrians their full rights in their lands which were occupied in the 1967 war, adding that Washington, which is sponsoring the peace process, bears serious responsibility towards achieving that aspired end.

The paper mentions the Israeli leaders' statements in which they reiterate their keen interest on signing peace with Damascus and Washington's commitment to play the role of full partner in the peace-making process.

A writer for Al Dustour described a U.N. Security Council demand to Sudan to hand over to Ethiopia three people suspected of colluding to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak as a prelude to imposing sanctions on Khartoum.

Taher Adwan said that it seems that the United States and its allies which dominate the fate of the Security Council are determined to isolate Sudan as they did to Libya and Iraq under very trivial pretexts, simply because these countries are not friendly to Washington.

The U.S. and its allies have earlier tried but failed to subdue Khartoum through military provocations perpetrated by Sudan's African neighbours and the new moves at the Security Council, said the writer, seem to be part of the ongoing Ameri-

can hostile measures against the Sudanese people.

He said that such a behaviour does not help bring about peace and security but rather endangers world peace.

A writer for Al Dustour criticised the government for its insistence on upholding the one-person one-vote system in its new draft elections law and said that this system, which has caused so much displeasure in the past, is bound to fuel heated debate in Parliament.

Fakhri Kassar said also the larger sector of population living in Amman and Zarqa governorates, who account for nearly 53 per cent of the population, are assigned 31 per cent of the total seats, while the 47 per cent of the population are allowed to dominate the remaining 69 seats under the present voting system.

The present government, he charged, is trying to shape the law in a manner that would best serve its own interests and not the people's interests, and is treating this issue as a political affair devoid of any meaning of democracy.

Taher Adwan, a writer for Al Dustour, said that the workforce employed by the private sector in Jordan far exceeds that employed by the public sector, but the private sector workers are not being given due attention by the government.

Banks and other private sector organisations have been arbitrarily dismissing employees for only demanding improvement of their working conditions and wages at a time when the whole nation realises that the banks, for instance, last year realised a 50 per cent profit and have no excuse for any lay offs.

The writer said that the government, backed by Parliament, should enact a law that would guarantee and safeguard the rights of these employees and prevent dismissals that tend to exacerbate the unemployment problem and destabilise national security.

## New Polish PM is lone wolf among ex-Communists

By Marcin Grajewski

WARSAW — Włodzisław Cimoszewicz, appointed Thursday to head a new leftist Polish cabinet, has often gone against the mainstream of his fellow former Communists and is considered the most independent among them. His appointment by President Aleksander Kwasniewski put an end to the nine-month-old cabinet of his colleague Józef Oleksy, who has quit over charges he had spied for Moscow.

Mr. Cimoszewicz, until now parliament's deputy speaker, has 14 days to form his cabinet and has launched talks on its line-up with the two coalition groups — his ex-Communist democratic left alliance and the Polish Peasant Party.

Mr. Cimoszewicz, 45, stood for president in the 1990 elections as the most credible among the ex-Communists who were then still despised by many Poles.

Although he lost then to anti-Communist Solidarity hero Lech Walesa, his good showing in the poll inspired his Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) group with hope for the political recovery they have since achieved.

As prime minister, he would have to lend his credibility to a government led by ex-Communists, on whom the Oleksy affair has cast a shadow.

Although the opposition generally says only a government of technocrats led by an independent politician could now be credible, some of its members cautiously welcomed Mr. Cimoszewicz's nomination, seeing him as the least unacceptable side figure.

The staunchly anti-Communist Primate Józef Glemp described him as "a thoughtful person who has political understanding."

Mr. Cimoszewicz, who unlike Mr. Kwasniewski and Mr. Oleksy was only a low-rank Communist Party member before 1989 when the old system collapsed, became prominent with the 1993 parliamentary elections in which the SLD scored a sweeping victory.

Well-groomed and articulate like SLD leader Kwasniewski, who defeated Mr. Walesa last November in the presidential vote, he helped persuade many Poles that his group could pursue market reforms while easing the pain associated with them.

He has confidently projected the image of a modern Social Democrat in the West European style, advocating a clear division between the Roman Catholic Church and the state and promoting women's issues.

Like most of his fellow ex-Communists, he supports Poland's efforts to join the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

In the first coalition government of the SLD and the Polish Peasant Party, formed in October 1993, Mr. Cimoszewicz was justice minister and a deputy prime minister.

He lost the posts in a cabinet reshuffle in March 1995 and became a deputy speaker of the lower house of parliament. He was chosen late last year to head parliament's important constitutional committee, working on Poland's new charter.

Mr. Cimoszewicz is seen as the most independent ex-Communist politician, a man who does not belong to any informal coterie within the SLD.

His sometimes uneasy relations with his colleagues deteriorated early in the campaign for last year's elections when he advocated a joint presidential candidate to represent left-wing and centrist parties.

He was also critical of Justice Minister Jerzy Jaskiernia, a senior SLD figure, alleging his colleague lacked the impartiality needed for the post.

Mr. Cimoszewicz holds a Warsaw University doctorate in law and was a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University in 1980-1981. From 1985 to 1989 he was a farmer in eastern Poland.



# Norway's aid now comes with strings attached

By Inger Sethov  
Reuters

OSLO — Oil-rich Norway, traditionally generous with foreign aid, is taking a tougher line with Third World countries which fail to fight corruption.

"We must allow ourselves to demand results from the developing world," said Asbjørn Mathiesen, state secretary for development cooperation in the foreign ministry.

Norway will now penalise governments which fail to comply with strict rules — strings will be attached to the flow of foreign aid from Oslo.

"We need to prevent developing countries from turning into 'welfare clients' without being able to show results," Mr. Mathiesen said.

A white paper on aid which is expected to be approved by parliament this spring wants recipients to encourage economic growth, strive for democracy and fight corruption in return for aid. Failure to do so means aid may be withheld.

"No country has ever

developed without contributing to its own development," Mr. Mathiesen said.

Norway is one of only four countries to meet the U.N. goal of earmarking at least 0.7 per cent of its gross national product (GNP) for bilateral aid. The others are Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands.

In 1994, Norway spent 1.05 per cent of its GNP on aid, the highest per-capita aid spending in the world, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The 1996 national budget shows an increase of 660 million crowns (\$101.9 million) in foreign aid spending, amounting to more than 8.5 billion crowns (\$1.31 billion), or one per cent of GNP, in foreign aid.

"This is a significant increase and proves Norway is serious in its priority for the world's poorest countries," Mr. Mathiesen said.

The eight per cent rise in foreign aid represents the greatest expenditure increase in the 1996 national

budget of Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland's labour government.

To further ensure a strict new foreign aid strategy, the government has established a separate control unit, a results management office, concentrating on project follow-up.

Terje Vigtel, a spokesman for the Norwegian Agency for Development, said the watchdog unit was in place from this year to ensure results-oriented spending of Norwegian aid.

The office's staff will visit developing countries to ensure that projects progress as planned.

"We will follow up the agreements and achieve maximum control over the resources we provide," Mr. Vigtel said. "Failure to comply with the rules may have consequences for the recipient."

Norway, Sweden and other donors cut off aid to Tanzania in 1994 after the World Bank unearthed a widespread tax evasion scandal which cost the Tanzanian treasury millions of dollars.

The new government of President Benjamin Mkapa

has vowed to fight corruption and improve working relations with Western donors, which underwrite lifeblood annual aid to Tanzania, one of the world's poorest countries.

Norway's contribution to Tanzania, one of its main foreign aid targets in the past 30 years, amounted to 300 million crowns (\$46.32 million) last year. In the wake of the corruption scandal, Norway withheld 47.5 million crowns (\$7.33 million) in aid.

"When Tanzania did not collect its own taxes, why should we help them pay their budget deficit?" asked Hans Jacob Frydenlund, spokesman for development cooperation in the foreign ministry.

Norwegian Minister for Development Cooperation Kari Nordheim-Larsen visited Tanzania this month to hand over 23.7 million crowns (\$3.66 million) — half the amount held back.

"If the Tanzanian government actually takes the actions it has promised, it will receive the other half," Mr. Frydenlund said.

# Bosnian refugee played dead to survive mass execution

By Mark Heinrich  
Reuters

TUZLA, Bosnia — Mevludin Oric can't sleep without a recurring nightmare — he's playing dead in a pile of fellow Muslims executed by Serb gunmen and his cousin, sprawled lifeless alongside, calls out to him to stand up.

Mr. Oric, a tall, gaunt refugee from Srebrenica, the U.N. "safe area" in Bosnia crushed by separatist Serbs in July 1995, is plagued by flashbacks to the most terrifying episode of his life, an ordeal he has recounted to war crimes investigators.

He and two other refugees told how they survived a machinegun massacre of hundreds of detainees, feigning death as Serb soldiers waded among the prone victims to finish them off.

Today, seven months after stumbling shellshocked through the woods to the safety of government territory, Mr. Oric is hoping for justice as U.N. investigators prepare to uncover suspected mass grave sites with the protection of NATO.

He has taken heart from the Jan. 21 tour of the killing fields by the top U.S. human rights official and the Serbs' submission to NATO peace enforcement troops, overwhelmingly Americans, in eastern Bosnia.

"I would like to be at the grave sites myself when they dig them up," said Mr. Oric, 26, a machinist in neighbouring Serbia before the war when Bosnia was still part of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Oric, his wife and three young children are now crammed with 29 other Srebrenica refugees into a school classroom in the northeastern, mainly Muslim government city of Tuzla.

The Oric family now

hopes to emigrate to the United States but Mevludin may first have a date with the International War Crimes Tribunal on former Yugoslavia in the Hague.

"They first questioned me last August and another Hague investigator came by the school the other day to ask me if I'd testify in an open court. I said I would," Mr. Oric told Reuters.

Mr. Oric, a cousin of Srebrenica's wartime Defence Commander Naser Oric, is considered a prime witness in the apparent liquidation of many hundreds of Srebrenica male prisoners in a field outside the hamlet of Sahanići on July 14, 1995.

Some 8,000 Srebrenica inhabitants vanished after its fall. Most are believed to have been slain in executions of prisoners or ambushes of fleeing refugees in possibly the worst war crime in Europe since the Nazi Holocaust.

Scores of suspected mass graves dot Serb-held eastern and northern Bosnia.

The U.N. tribunal plans public hearings shortly to crank up pressure on ethnic nationalist leaders in former Yugoslavia to extradite suspects — 52 people have been indicted so far, all but six of them Bosnian Serbs.

Mr. Oric was on the run through the rugged wooded hills of eastern Bosnia with hundreds of other draft-age men when they were intercepted and captured near Konjevic Polje on July 13.

They were loaded onto buses and taken to Bratunac where they were told the next day that they would be transferred to government-held Ključ for an exchange.

But the buses instead headed east towards Zvornik, then veered northwest and stopped in Sahanići where the prisoners were crowded into a gymnasium. "Around 500 prisoners were already there," Mr.

Oric said.

The Muslims were again assured they would be traded for Serbs, this time in Tuzla. Serb militiamen then started to blindfold the Srebrenica detainees and lead them out of the gymnasium one by one, piling them aboard trucks, Mr. Oric said.

"As soon as one was loaded up, it left. The trucks always returned empty within five minutes," he said.

"I was in the sixth group. We drove about three minutes, stopped beside a field and were ordered to get out. We had to line up and I took the hand of my cousin, Haris Hasanovic."

"Haris told me: 'they're going to kill us', I said, 'no they won't, there are so many of us here.' I had hardly finished my sentence when the shooting started."

"Bullets flew and Haris was hit, but I was spared. I saw I had no time to lose, let go of his hands and fell to the ground. He fell over my legs. I played dead."

"I lay all day there. The Serbs brought in more people to kill. Not one bullet hit me even though they were cutting down people in row after row that fell one after another."

"One prisoner jumped out of line and fled. The Serb commandant chewed out his men for not doing their job. I heard him order them to shoot every detainee a second time in the head to make sure they were dead," said Mr. Oric.

"They came near me and shot one man. His blood splattered across my face. I feared there was no way they would miss me now. I shut my eyes tight. But then they moved away. I lost consciousness, maybe from shock."

Mr. Oric came to hours later with a light rain falling in the muggy night. "I

could see them digging a big pit. They switched on the lights of their cars to help them see," he said.

"A commandant came and said not to put us in the hole yet, just put a guard there and finish up in the morning. They started to argue because no one wanted to stay overnight as the guard. Finally they all got into their cars and left."

"I lay there a while longer because maybe they were still lurking nearby, waiting for someone to stand up and get shot," said Mr. Oric. "Beetles and ants were biting my body. I struggled for five minutes to extricate myself from my cousin's legs."

When Mr. Oric stood up, a voice came out of the darkness, asking: "Are you wounded?" He froze, smelling a trick. But it was another prisoner, Hurem Suljic. Both were unhurt.

Scores of corpses were strewn about them, he said. "I saw the grave the Serbs had just dug was four metres deep. We left, and walked all night, not knowing where."

"We ran into another escapee from the massacre, Smail Hodzic, the next morning. He told us the car lights had not shone on him so he slipped away during the shooting."

"The three of us walked seven days through the forest to government lines. We lived on mushrooms and fruit."

"We came across Serb trenches a few times, got shot at but not hit. Reaching free (government) territory was like rebirth. I think luck and God's will, God's destiny, saved us," he said.

His wife and children had made it out to Tuzla safely on one of several bus convoys laid out by the Serbs to speed up the "ethnic cleansing" of Srebrenica.

## Kabariti poised to form government

(Continued from page 1)

crucial ministries."

Mr. Kabariti's biggest challenge is to come up with a team that has a wide enough parliamentary base while at the same time it is strong and harmonious enough to introduce the necessary change, government observers and analysts said.

The pressure is increased on Mr. Kabariti, according to these analysts, but the knowledge that the King's decision to introduce major change at this time comes at the risk of a repeat of the failure of a previous attempt to bring to

the fore young politicians in the 1990s.

"Mr. Kabariti will be working hard and very carefully on the make-up of his cabinet in order to avoid the fate of that experience," a seasoned analyst told the Jordan Times. "The country cannot afford the failure of this fresh attempt. There is too much at stake this time."

It has taken the King three years to revive the effort with a young dynamic prime minister after former Prime Minister Taher Masi's government was unable to sustain itself for more than six months in 1991, this and

other analysts noted. At the time, Mr. Masi was forced to resign under pressure from traditional politicians and conservative parliamentarians who were not ready to accept change, in either emphasis or style, or to give way to a new generation of politicians.

Mr. Masi's experience will be on Mr. Kabariti's mind as he forms his government this week, and the prime minister-designate will have to ensure that His Majesty's trust in him is well-placed despite the enormity of his task," a former senior official said.

## Toll goes up in Colombo blast

(Continued from page 12)

crease searches and set up more road blocks. Visitors to the Defence Ministry were body searched at five points at the tightly guarded building. Roads near vital installations and residences of President Kumaratunga, a known target of the Tigers, have already been closed.

Downtown Colombo remained cordoned off by hundreds of heavily armed police and soldiers as forensic experts sifted through the rubble.

Fire fighters picked up more than 100 million rupees (\$2 million) worth of diamonds from a jewellery salon that was badly burnt and handed them over to the owners, a spokesman for the Colombo municipal fire brigade said.

Rescue workers were not at all hopeful of finding survivors. "It's not looking good," one policeman supervising the work said. "It's hard work and time is passing."

Police commando rescue teams wearing respirators found two decomposed bodies from devastated buildings opposite the central bank while firemen and soldiers found the body of a woman and a girl on the fourth floor of the bank on Friday morning.

The smell of decomposing bodies still buried beneath the rubble was beginning to pervade the air at the scene of the blast.

Police at the site said rescue workers were picking carefully through the rubble, supervised by engineers trying to ensure that falling debris does not affect any pockets that might contain survivors.

But they said hopes were remote of finding any. "I don't think anyone has heard a sound from under there," one policeman said.

Police arrested six more suspects on Friday morning and Thursday bringing the number of people detained over the bomb attack at 30, state radio said.

The guerrillas were believed to have arrived in Colombo on Jan. 8 to carry out an attack the government had been expecting since the military offensive captured Jaffna.

Police said the two members of the squad, captured shortly after the blast with automatic rifles, bomb-making kits and radio equipment, had confessed to being members of the Tiger hit squad and had identified the man who drove the truck into the central bank as a colleague.

Sri Lankan authorities have not said how many suspected Tigers they were looking for but have issued an appeal for information on anyone seen near the truck when it spent the night in a Colombo parking lot before heading for the bank.

## Peres sees 'total' peace in Mideast

(Continued from page 1)

But the late premier, Yitzhak Rabin, had pressed ahead because he felt Israel no longer could dominate the Palestinian people. "That was the idea we began with," he said.

"No longer do we dominate the lives of the Palestinians," he said. "This is first and foremost a moral victory."

U.S. President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister John Major said on Thursday they were hopeful that Israel and Syria would reach a peace agreement.

"I believe that President Assad is genuinely committed to the right kind of peace and I believe that Prime Minister Peres is committed to the right kind of peace," Mr. Clinton told reporters in Washington. "I am quite hopeful."

In London, Mr. Major said the resumption of peace talks between Israeli and Syrian negotiators had revitalised the peace process and rekindled hope that a solution could be reached soon.

He was speaking at a dinner in honour of Mr. Shimon

Peres, on a 24-hour London visit, who earlier said that although there were still differences between Israel and Syria, "there is a beginning which enables us to go forward."

"Peace means more than mere treaties and handing over of territory," Mr. Major said. "True peace means open borders, free trade, tourists free to visit one another's countries, and a shared economic interest in the maintenance of peace."

"Only in such a feeling of security can any permanent peace endure," he added. Earlier Thursday, Mr. Peres said that Israeli-Syrian negotiations that ended Wednesday in the Washington suburb of Wye Plantation, Maryland, "in my judgement were initially a success."

"We don't have yet a breakthrough, this will come in the future," he said.

Mr. Clinton, at a news conference with French President Jacques Chirac, said he was encouraged that Israeli and Syrian military leaders were talking about peace but added that there are complex issues still to be resolved.

"The United States does

not impose timetables on others, nor do we project them. All we try to do is to help the parties make peace. The timetable, like everything else, is up to them," he said.

A statement issued on Wednesday by U.S. mediator Dennis Ross made clear that no breakthroughs had occurred and that serious gaps remained between the two long-time foes in their talks on a proposed Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights.

However, Mr. Ross described the talks between Israeli and Syrian diplomats and military experts as a "solid basis" for a new shuttle tour which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will make next week for talks in Israel and Syria.

Official Radio Damascus said the "the marathon sessions that have taken place have brought nothing" because Israeli negotiators "did not bring with them any proposals contributing to the peace process."

The Israeli government, the Syrian radio said, still refuses to commit itself to returning the entire Golan Heights.

## Gazans banned from Al Aqsa prayers

(Continued from page 1)

**Prisoner dies**

A member of the Hamas organisation has died in an Israeli jail, the Israeli army said on Friday.

Hamas blamed Israel for the death of 21-year-old Abdul Rahman Omar Zaid Al Kilani, from the West Bank village of Yaabad.

Palestinians said he had been held without charge. His body was discovered in a cell at Israel's Megiddo prison on Thursday.

An Israeli army statement confirmed his death and said police were investigating the circumstances.

Relatives said there were marks of violence on the body. An autopsy was being performed to determine the cause of death.

"We consider him a martyr who held Israel responsible for his death," a Hamas statement said.

**Stolen cars collected**

Palestinian police have begun seizing stolen Israeli cars hidden in PLO-ruled areas, and returned more than 200 vehicles this week, Palestinian officials said Friday.

Car thefts have been a sore point in Israeli-Palestinian relations. Since the start of Palestinian self-rule in May 1994, some 30,000 cars have been stolen in Israel each year. Most were driven into PLO-ruled areas where thieves are out of reach for Israeli law enforcement.

Israel has accused Palestinian police of not doing enough to return the vehicles. In the Gaza Strip, the Palestinians have even licensed thousands of stolen cars and officials in the self-rule government are seen driving stolen vehicles.

Israeli officials said Friday, that the Palestinian police

campaign was a good start, but that more must be done.

"People need to know that it does not pay to steal cars and smuggle them into the autonomous areas," said Shlomo Dror, spokesman for Oren Shahor, Israel's policy adviser on Palestinian affairs.

Since the campaign began earlier this week, Palestinian police have seized some 220 cars in the West Bank.

In the West Bank town of Jericho, police set up checkpoints at main intersections Friday and flagged down motorists for licence checks. Seventeen stolen cars were seized Thursday, officials said.

"We are conducting a wide campaign to arrest those behind the car thefts and also to collect the stolen cars," said Ribhi Arafat, a senior Palestinian officer.

However, officials acknowledged it was unlikely the stolen cars would be taken away from government officials.

## PLO 'fully satisfied' with Jordan's stand

(Continued from page 1)

On the technical level, "the King also promised Jordanian support, wherever it is possible, for the Palestinian (National) Authority," Mr. Khatib told the Jordan Times.

According to Mr. Khatib, the main focus of the meetings Mr. Nashashibi held here was "how to reinstitute Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in all areas related to the series of agreements that the two sides have signed."

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker met with Mr. Nashashibi on Thursday. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the two sides agreed to consolidate Jordanian-Palestinian trade relations and revive moves to implement other economy-related agreements signed by the two sides.

Sharif Zeid promised Jordanian support and technical aid to the Palestinians "to help them build the in-

situations of their independent state," Petra reported. Mr. Khatib said the two sides agreed to convene a Jordanian-Palestinian ministerial level meeting and form technical committees to work out and set priority tasks to be accomplished.

However, Mr. Khatib conceded, "immediate moves" were not possible in this regard because of the state of transition in the Palestinian political arena between the Jan. 20 elections to a self-rule council and the first meeting of the council, expected after Feb. 20.

"We hope to convene a ministerial level shortly after the council meets and forms a Palestinian cabinet," said Mr. Khatib. "And then the technical committees will be formed."

One of the issues decided during the meetings was the drawing up of a list of Jordanian produce for export to the Palestinian territories.

Trade volume between the two sides between May and December last year — after they signed a trade agreement — was \$52 million, most of it in Jordanian imports of Palestinian products.

Jordanian officials have expressed dismay that the Palestinian side had not moved in realistic terms to fully take advantage of the potential for Jordanian Palestinian trade and that the PNA itself seemed to be taking it easy when it came to imports of Jordanian products.

During last week's meetings, the Palestinian side sought "Jordanian technical expertise in all areas of administration and Jordan agreed to the request," said Mr. Khatib.

Mr. Khatib said Palestinian moves towards issuing a currency were not discussed during the meetings. "It is premature to discuss a Palestinian currency," he said.

Reports in the local press said early last week that Mr. Arafat, in a meeting with Sharif Zeid, had outlined the PNA's quest to have a Palestinian currency but gave an undertaking that the realisation of such a move would not come before three years.

Jordanian currency worth about \$500 million in circulation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Jordanian officials have said that it would not make economic sense for the PNA to issue its currency, but that the Kingdom was prepared for the eventuality of having to withdraw its currency but with proper advance notice from the PNA.

Economic experts believe that the issuance of a Palestinian currency might not come at all in the next five years except as a token of Palestinian independence but that it would not have any real impact on the circulation of the Jordanian dinar in the Palestinian territories.

## ICRC identifies prison site

(Continued from page 1)

comes after weeks of friction between the aid organisation and the Bosnian government over the mutual prisoner release process.

The ICRC has maintained for weeks that "dozens" of Serb prisoners were being held by Bosnian authorities in Tuzla, unvisited and unregistered.

The Bosnian side for its part has accused the ICRC of doing little to unearth the truth about thousands of its own missing men.

When refugees from Srebrenica ransacked the ICRC office in Tuzla earlier this week, the organisation accused the government of facilitating the attack by blaming the ICRC for the Srebrenica tragedy and failing to provide adequate police defence when the offices were being attacked.

## S. Arabia cautions over 986

(Continued from page 1)

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported Thursday that Mr. Anbari had left for New York, but did not say whether he had departed from Baghdad or Paris.

The Iraqi delegation is to comprise eight members, including Mr. Anbari, according to the Iraqi embassy.

U.N. sources say that the U.N. team, to be led by chief legal counsel Hans Corell, will have the same number.

A state-run weekly urged meanwhile Iraqis not to jump to conclusions that next week's talks would result in a one-time oil sale to pay for

\$2 billion worth of medical and food supplies.

"There is no dramatic change in the political attitude between our country and those imposing this embargo on us," said the widely circulated publication.

Alef Ba' commentary was signed by Abdul Jabbar Muhssen, a former press secretary of President Saddam Hussein who once served as director of the powerful political guidance directorate at the Defence Ministry during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The magazine criticised

those Iraqis who fired shots into the air as a sign of jubilation and questioned the recent surge in the value of the Iraqi dinar as people rushed to sell their U.S. dollars in expectation that a deal with the U.N. can be worked out.

"I have not heard... from any official a statement helping us understand what is going on or to bring us near to its comprehension," Mr. Muhssen said in his article.

On Thursday, the Iraqi dinar traded at 700 to the U.S. dollar, up from 800 paid on Wednesday. The black market rate rose to 500 dinars to the dollar.

## Islamists seen seeking JEA helm

(Continued from page 12)

Ahmad Kilani (Islamist). Candidates for the one Chemical engineering seat are: Jamal Abu Salem (Islamist) and Mohammad Asha (Islamist).

Candidates for the mining branch's one seat are: Mohammad Abu Taha (Islamist), Jalal Khreisat (nationalist), Salem Abu Hedeib (nationalist) and Zuhair Rabba (Islamist).

Jordan Times  
Tel: 684311/699634



## Investors weather fears of AFM plunge on reduced exports to Iraq

**By a Jordan Times  
Staff Reporter**

## U.N. cuts pencils, paper in austerity drive

**UNITED NATIONS (AFP)** — Diplomats attending meetings at the United Nations will have to provide their own pencils and paper from next week as U.N. officials have decided to stop providing them as part of an austerity drive.

Benon Sevan, U.N. assistant secretary-general for conference and support services, announced Thursday that in the light of the U.N. financial crisis, "providing pencils and paper in meetings rooms is a luxury that we will no longer be able to afford."

He said the change would save the United Nations up to \$200,000 per year, and would start next week.

Mr. Sevan also detailed other cutbacks, including on document copying and contract translation, which he said could save more than \$1 million per year.

## U.S. Congress approves telecom reform

The United Nations has a liquidity crisis triggered by member states' failures to pay their dues. The international body is owed a total \$2.3 billion in arrears, including \$1.2 billion owed by the United States.

Meanwhile, some ten per cent of jobs at the U.N. European headquarters in Geneva are under threat because of a financial crisis triggered by member countries'

Administration Director Maryann Baquerot said 250 of the 2,500 jobs in Europe would be frozen or eliminated because member countries failed to pay arrears of

**\$3.3 billion by Jan. 15.**  
**"We are implementing a programme of voluntary early retirement and its success will depend on the number of**

**HOROSCOPE**  
**FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1996**

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Get together with persons who really think, and hit on the right philosophy of life which can bring you more success and happiness.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) This is a fine day for thinking out what should be completed so that you increase success and feel happier.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Get you life better organized today and take any health treatments which you need so that you become dynamic.

**MOON CHANGES:** (June 22 to July 22) This is a fine day for thinking out what should be completed so that you increase success and feel happier.

## **THE BETTER HALF** By Glasbergen

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### Thursday's puzzle solver

11	Cuspid kin	48	Test ore	54	Plate
12	Bouquet	49	Is inclined	55	Spot
13	Information	51	Gamble	57	Sheriff's asst.
19	Code kind	52	Solution	58	— the
21	Container	53	In the sack		ramparts...
24	— Lake				
25	Lodges				
26	—Inendly				
27	Chopin or Copernicus				
28	Antilles island				
29	Drama awards				
32	Get a lift				
33	St. —'s fire				
34	Verve				
35	Thesaurus				
	entres: abbr.				
37	Unerring				
38	Jab				
41	Turn down				
44	Battlefield fence, of a kind				
45	Drinks slowly				
46	Time zone letters				
47	Lombardi of football				

11 AMA JIBS TAMO  
 12 BOYLES LAW RADIX  
 13 CONESTOGA ARULE  
 19 FULTONS FOLLY  
 24 LAOTSE SET TEE  
 25 OHMY  
 26 TEA MINOTAUR  
 27 MRSOLEARY SCOW  
 32 SLEEKEST BIB  
 33 CORTEx SODA  
 34 AMO EAR EMCEES  
 35 JACOBS GLADDER  
 37 ONKEY OMISSIBLE  
 38 LIENS PEEKSPEAK  
 41 ESTO EELY EGG

## Peanuts

DID SCROOGE EVER HAVE A DOG? YES, HE HAD ONE WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER, BUT THE DOG LEFT HIM..

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## Andy Capp

1978-1979  
 3-17 BY ILLUSTRATION: PETER HANSEN NORTH  
 AND NICK VINCIGUERRA INC.

Panel 1:  
 Man: BUY YOU A DRINK, DEAR?  
 Bartender: SUPER

Panel 2:  
 Man: LOVELY LAGS THAT, AND, NEVER TURN HER NOSE UP NEVER SULKY OR CRITICAL

Panel 3:  
 Man: PROBABLY SAVING IT UP FOR THE BLACKSHE MASSES, JACK  
 Bartender: COULD BE

## Mutt'n'Jeff

CICERO, HOW OFTEN MUST I TELL YOU TO STOP JUMPING WITH THAT STICK IN THE HOUSE!

O.K. MA!

EEK!

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AL SMITH

## HOROSCOPE

**FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1996**

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Get together with persons who really think, and hit on the right philosophy of life which can bring you more success and happiness.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) This is a fine day for thinking out what should be completed so that you increase success and feel happier.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Get you life better organised today and take any health treatments which you need so that you become dynamic.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) This is an ideal day to analyse your career progress and how to reach your goals faster as well as gain personal wishes.

**LEO: (July 22 to August 21)**  
Go with good friends to some interesting place where you can find data you need for tonight interests. Make activities for tonight brighter.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Concentrate on what should be completed in worldly matters so that you gain prestige within the community in which you live.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) This is a good day for study which will give you the knowledge you need to make tonight brighter for your yourself.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) You have many intuitive ideas today, but be sure to follow the best of these. Get into some project with your mate which is interesting.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Come to a better understanding with an irritable but dynamic person today who has good ideas just the same.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Planning your activities for the new week in a nicely organised way is wise today. Enjoy your family.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) This is an ideal day to study how to get your finest talents working efficiently. Don't lose your temper.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) Your best activity will be in your home and with family today. Get much completed around the house. Be wise.

**Birthstone of February: Amethyst**

**Business**

**Jobs**

A Jordan Times Staff Reporter

NAB — Jordan Insurance Co. has registered after approval of new regulations issued by the government to set up in Jordan a new insurance company, said Friday.

The company, named NAB, will be set up in Jordan as a limited liability company, said Gamallah, a former minister who now runs the private business.

The government in Jordan, also said world.

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# Jordan International Insurance starts operations

By a Jordan Times  
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan International Insurance, one of the first firms registered after the enactment of new regulations that allowed new insurance firms to be set up in Jordan, has started operations, its chairman said Friday.

Sami Gammoh, a former finance minister who recently left private business after leaving government in January 1994, also said work was

underway on a Jordan-based international reinsurance company with a JD 20 to JD 25 million capital.

Jordan International has fully-paid-up capital of JD 4 million, half of it raised by its founding members and the other half through private subscription, Mr. Gammoh said.

"We started operations as of Feb. 1 and will be offering insurance services locally as well as regionally," Mr.

Gammoh told the Jordan Times.

The main founding members of the company include the Social Security Corporation (SSC), the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the Jordan National Bank and the Jordan Investment and Finance Bank.

Mr. Gammoh chairs an 11-member board of directors who are mainly businessmen. The former finance minister said work was "almost

complete" on forming an international reinsurance company, the first to be based in Jordan, and he expected the firm to be operational in "two to three months."

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) and an American firm will contribute 50 per cent of the capital of the reinsurance company while the rest will be raised locally, Mr. Gammoh said.

"We will be offering reinsurance to Jordanian firms as well as other firms in the

Middle East and the Far East," said Mr. Gammoh.

Reinsurance business is slowly booming in the region in the wake of increased economic activities resulting from the breakthroughs in the Middle East peace process. But most of the business is done by companies based in Europe and the United States in the absence of local companies. As such, a Jordan-based firm is well poised to do good business, industry experts say.

On the local insurance scene, Jordan International is among five newly registered firms. The others are in the process of completing formalities and raising capital either through private or public subscription.

Only one among them, Sager Insurance, has announced plans to raise JD 1.5 million — or half of its capital — through public subscription starting in the first week of February.

## Daily Business Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Commercial deals between Jordan and Palestine near JD 37m in 8 months

★ FRESH OFFICIAL statistics show that the total value of commercial deals between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority have amounted to nearly JD 37 million (\$52 million) during the past eight months. Jordanian exports, amounting to JD 4 million, included palm oil, textbooks, cement, glass flasks and prayer carpets. Palestinian exports amounted to JD 33 million since the signing of the trade cooperation protocol between the two countries. The exports included fruits, vegetables, foodstuffs, building stones, honey, welding rods, soap and marble. Both sides hope to increase the trade exchange between them in the near future after amending the articles of the economic agreement signed between the Palestinians and Israel. The agreement does not allow establishing any trade relations between the Palestinians and other Arab countries except through Israel and in accordance with the Paris economic accord signed in 1993 (Al Aswaq).

### Arab Media Investment Company begins operations

★ THE ARAB MEDIA Investment is the newest holding company registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade as a public shareholding company with a JD 6 million capital. The 194 founders and shareholders of the company have covered JD 5.2 million and the remainder will be covered later by some investors. The company is licensed to invest in all forms of media activities and plans to absorb the entity that currently publishes Al Aswaq Arabic daily as a first step in its wide-ranging schemes. At a general assembly meeting the shareholders elected Ali Suheimat as chairman of the board. The other board members who were elected are: Mohammad Faeq Abdul Kar (vice chairman), Dr. Amin Mahmoud, Ibrahim Ezzeddin, Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Ludvig Wahbeh Tamari, Mustafa Abu Libdeh, the Jordan Gulf Bank, Al Salam Investment Company, the National Ahlia Insurance Company, Comcent Trading and Contracting, the Jordan Services Company and Fadan Establishment (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq).

### TV, radio and cinema company to stay in business despite losses

★ THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Jordan Company for TV, Radio and Cinema Production has decided to keep the company alive despite having accumulated JD 6.7 million in losses until the end of 1994. Current liabilities have exceeded current assets by JD 5.3 million. According to the internal regulations of the company, the general assembly should decide the fate of the company if its accumulated losses exceed half of the capital. However, if losses exceed 75 per cent of the capital, liquidation becomes obligatory. In 1994, the company's total sales amounted to JD 373,000 but the costs of production were JD 705,000, resulting in a JD 332,000 loss. At the end of 1993, the company posted a JD 432,000 profit. The 1994 balance sheet shows total assets at JD 1.7 million while shareholders' equity stood at JD 2.9 million, down from JD 3.23 million in 1993.

### Arab Potash Company pays JD 14 million in 1995 income tax

THE ARAB POTASH Company (APC) on Thursday paid JD 14 million in income tax and will soon be paying JD 6.8 million in mining tax to the Ministry of Finance. The company made a JD 42 million net profit in 1995, 45 per cent more than the previous year. APC earned a total of \$182 million as its sales to 32 countries reached 1.76 million tonnes, 16 per cent above the 1994 volume. The company produced 1.78 million tonnes of potash, 15 per cent higher than the production figure in 1994.

APC has started implementing its second expansion programme to bring production up to 2.2 million tonnes. The expansion is due for completion in three years. The company will be building a new plant to produce 100,000 tonnes of industrial potash and this project is due for completion in one year. The company is striving to implement the bromine, magnesium oxide, potassium sulphate, industrial salt and table salt projects (Al Ra'i).

## AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (27/01/1996 - 31/01/1996)  
WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PRIV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK P.C.	383,495	234.000	234.000	233.900
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	68,083	4.380	4.380	4.400
BANK OF JORDAN	194,775	3.600	3.600	3.550
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	72,364	1.200	1.200	1.180
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	24,303	2.640	2.640	2.680
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NEW	38,363	2.510	2.510	2.580
THE HOUSING BANK	95,229	4.750	4.750	5.090
JORDAN KIWAT BANK	7,382	2.750	2.750	2.720
JORDAN GULF BANK	275,157	1.050	1.050	1.020
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	3,900	3.800	3.800	3.800
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	141,488	3.670	3.670	3.700
UNION BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT	14,892	1.900	1.900	1.854
BUSINESS BANK	3,130	3.180	3.180	3.130
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	1,058	3.520	3.520	3.540
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	29,847	0.850	0.850	0.840
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	1,044	5.230	5.230	5.230
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	60,309	1.350	1.350	1.320

BANKS SECTOR 1415016 INDEX NUMBER: 186.16  
CHANGE: -0.28%

JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	24,337	2.730	2.730	2.800
BOLY LAND INSURANCE	3,400	1.900	1.900	2.000
PHILADELPHIA INSURANCE	11,500	4.600	4.600	4.600
JORDAN GULF INSURANCE	4,734	2.650	2.650	2.750

INSURANCE SECTOR 46273 INDEX NUMBER: 123.85  
CHANGE: +40.50%

JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	77,882	1.680	1.680	1.700
JORDAN DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	11,640	1.260	1.260	1.350
JORDAN NUBIA MINERAL	928	2.300	2.300	2.920
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	8,634	3.590	3.590	3.600
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	258	2.560	2.560	2.580
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	5,477	1.620	1.620	1.560
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	407	0.980	0.980	0.960
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	3,180	1.040	1.040	1.060
MACHINERY EQUIP. REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	4,071	0.710	0.710	0.720
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRAI	1,025	10.300	10.300	10.250
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONDOMINIUM HOTELS	15,442	2.140	2.140	2.120
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	165,843	3.450	3.450	3.480
AMMAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	10,113	3.200	3.200	3.160
UNITED CO. FOR ORNAMENTING LAND TRAM.	70,573	2.200	2.200	2.200
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	2,453	0.950	0.950	0.930

SERVICES SECTOR 378046 INDEX NUMBER: 126.00  
CHANGE: +40.15%

THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	318,059	3.580	3.580	3.700
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	5,227	3.260	3.260	3.200
THE ARAB POTASH	8,519	5.420	5.420	5.850
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	73,474	9.750	9.750	9.770

## THE INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL

THE JORDAN MOVED HILLS	4,140	7.550	7.550	7.500
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	81,043	4.550	4.550	4.530
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	988	6.100	6.100	6.100
JORDAN DAILY	3,443	2.550	2.550	2.550
THE JORDAN PIPE MANUFACTURING	26,950	2.250	2.250	2.200
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	1,721	2.120	2.120	2.040
DAR AL HANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	47,449	7.050	7.050	7.300
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	20,867	3.450	3.450	3.450
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	56,582	0.560	0.560	0.560
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	14,271	1.390	1.390	1.390
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	16,352	1.660	1.660	1.650
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	8,427	0.980	0.980	0.880
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	9,773	1.450	1.450	1.370
JORDAN ROBOOD INDUSTRIES	3,158	0.990	0.990	0.940
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	1,528	3.600	3.600	3.600
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	492	1.250	1.250	1.240
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	3,846	1.670	1.670	1.620
KANTHER INVESTMENT	1,473	1.550	1.550	1.550
UNIVERSAL INDUSTRIAL INDUSTRIES	14,344	3.150	3.150	3.080
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	27,426	1.850	1.850	1.840
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	35,332	1.360	1.360	1.300
AL-YAT READY WORK MANUFACTURING CO.	16,065	2.220	2.220	2.190
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	54,831	1.360	1.360	1.360
UNION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRIES	13,829	1.520	1.520	1.540

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR 80881 INDEX NUMBER: 123.70  
CHANGE: +1.24%

GRAND TOTAL 2726205 INDEX NUMBER: 184.47

PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (27/01/1996 - 31/01/1996)  
WEEKLY REPORT

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PRIV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	1,494	0.710	0.710	0.690
JORDAN TRADE FACILITIES	149,837	0.760	0.760	0.780
ARAB TIF INV. CO.	16,342	0.920	0.920	0.930
UNION INVESTMENT CORP. 50%	18,823	0.830	0.830	0.840
ARAB FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES	456	0.770	0.770	0.760
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	3,321	0.640	0.640	0.610
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	1,570	0.400	0.400	0.380
NATIONAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES CO. LTD	19,475	1.700	1.700	1.620
NATIONAL TEXTILES & PLASTICS IND. CO.	989	0.870	0.870	0.860
KID PHARM	7,520	0.720	0.720	0.730
JORDAN STEEL	24,361	0.540	0.540	0.530
UNION TOBACCO	4,481	1.210	1.210	1.210
RAST PHARMACEUTICALS	4,143	0.750	0.750	0.760
INDUSTRIES ENGINEERING	3,025	0.740	0.740	0.750
INDUSTRIAL CERAMIC	4,494	1.250	1.250	1.250
PEARL SANITARY PAPER CONVERTING	225	0.810	0.810	0.800
NATIONAL POLYMER 50%	5,452	0.800	0.800	0.810
MIDDLE EAST COMPLEX	15,365	0.810	0.810	0.750
NATIONAL RUBY ENG. IND. / MANICO.	43,365	0.900	0.900	0.900

GRAND TOTAL 331743

## JORDAN MARKETPLACE

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Jordan Times		
in co-operation with		
Cairo Amman Bank		
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin		
Currency	Buy	Sell
U.S. Dollar	0.708	0.710
Sterling Pound	1.0708	1.0762
Deutsche Mark	0.4758	0.4782
Swiss Franc	0.5845	0.5874
French Franc	0.1358	0.1375
Japanese Yen	0.6616	0.6649
Dutch Guilder	0.4249	0.4270
Swedish Krona	—	—
Italian Lira	0.0447	0.0449
Belgian Franc	—	—
Other Currencies		
Currency	Buy	Sell
Bahrein Dinar	1.8620	1.5780
Lebanese Lira	0.0445	0.0445
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1878
Kuwait Dinar	1.3070	1.3670
Qatari Riyal	0.1922	0.1945

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES		
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.		
One U.S. dollar	1.3726/36	Canadian dollar
	1.4880/90	Deutschmarks
	1.6666/76	Dutch guilders
	1.2214/24	Swiss francs
	30.58/62	Belgian francs
	5.1124/74	French francs
	1577.48/9	Italian lire
	106.65/75	Japanese yen
	6.9520/20	Swedish crowns
	6.4960/10	Norwegian crowns
	5.7513/61	Danish crowns
	1.4175/85	Singapore dollars
	0.7553/58	Australian dollars
	7.7315/25	Hong Kong dollars
One sterling	\$1.5182/92	
One ounce of gold	\$414.80/415.30	



## African Nations' Cup

## South Africa strong favourites to win title

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South Africa square up to Tunisia in Saturday's surprise African Nations Cup final knowing political considerations make it more than a mere football match.

Coach Clive Barker, on the verge of winning the title on their first attempt, admitted there was pressure to emulate last year's rugby world champions on home soil.

"The rugby guys have done it, so we need to too," Barker said. And, referring to political advantages beyond football, he added: "Sport breaks down more barriers than politics. They know they have to win."

Barker will probably bring in striker Phil Masinga, suspended in the 3-0 semi-final win over Ghana, in place of Shaun Bartlett in their only change.

And Tunisian coach Henri Kasperczak, whose team is suffering a chaotic build-up, is set to play defender Riadh Bouazizi in place of suspended Ahmed Trabelsi.

Kasperczak has already had to do without knee-victim Imed Ben Younes, who has scored three goals, and fellow injured striker Jamaledine Limane for the final.

Tunisia spent a disastrous first day after flying in to Johannesburg from Durban where they beat Zambia 4-2 in the semi-final.

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Crown Plaza, the hotel given them by the organising committee, stank of paint, though the players did eventually spend Thursday night there.

South Africa and Tunisia throw up an interesting fixture with South Africa's many European-based players against a team based solely on players from home clubs.

South Africa's playmaking midfielders Doctor Khumalo and "Shoes" Moshoeu, who has also scored four goals, will be relying on the ball-winning skills of freekick specialist Eric Tinkler and Innocent "Iron Man" Buthelesi to gain possession.

And with Neil Tovey and Mark Fish starring in defence in front of keeper Andre Arendse, and a class attack of Masinga and Mark Williams. South Africa are effective in every department.

Kasperczak, who took Ivory Coast to third place in the 1994 tournament, is banking on youth in his selection policy with players at an average age of 24.

South Africa, ranked fifth in Africa and 29th in the world, are set to become the first side south of the equator to win the title since Zaire — mostly south of zero latitude — won in 1974.

However Tunisia have already equalled their best ever showing in six appearances, of second place in 1965 when they lost a final to

Ghana.

And before the tournament, Tunisia, though ranked sixth in Africa and 31 in the world, were not expected to get through their group which included Ghana, Ivory Coast and Mozambique.

A victory would also help wipe away the memory of humiliation by media and spectators two years ago when hosts Tunisia failed to get through their group when they were tipped to reach the final.

Madhi Slimane on the right and Adel Sellimi up front, ably backed up by midfielders Zoubair Beya and Kaies Khodhbane, could cause south Africa's defence a problem or two.

At the other end of the field, towering left back Hedi Ben Rekhis, one of the players of the tournament, is solid in defence and dangerous in attack from crosses or corners.

Tunisia's speed on the break is another aspect of their game which could cause problems for the home side.

Kasperczak added his side must quickly adapt to the height of Johannesburg at more than 1,800 metres above sea level, following matches at lower levels in Port Elizabeth and Durban.

Zambia and Ghana compete for third place at 1:30 p.m. (1130 GMT) at the FNB Stadium before the 4:30 p.m. (1430 GMT) final.

## Premier League roundup

## Wihdat take lead as Ramtha stumble

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — As expected, the matches of the 20th week of the Kingdom's Premier League soccer competition were quite crucial and made a stunning impact on the race for the title.

With a record number of 20 goals scored in Friday's three matches Al Wihdat took the lead, Al Ramtha dropped to second place and Al Qadissieh moved to fourth.

Al Wihdat moved to the top spot for the first time this season after a 3-1 win over Kufroum.

While Al Wihdat's win was expected in their bid to retain the title, Al Faisali's 5-0 win over leaders Al Ramtha was the last thing fans expected.

Although they remained in third place for now, Al Faisali's win gave them 39 points in the standings before facing lowly Al Russeifa and Al Ahli.

Al Ramtha's stunning defeat meant they took second place behind Al Wihdat for now before facing Al Qadissieh and Sahab in their upcoming matches.

Al Wihdat meanwhile next play Al Baqaa and Al Hussein.

In another of Friday's matches, Al Qadissieh moved up to fourth place after overwhelming 11th placed Al Jalil 8-3.

On Thursday, Al Ahli moved to sixth place and strengthened their position in the league after a 5-0 drubbing of last-placed Al Russeifa.

It was Al Russeifa's 20th consecutive loss, making them remain with no points in the overall standings while also having the worst scoring record at 15-82.

Al Jalil's Ibrahim Abdul Hadi remained the league's top scorer with a record 17 goals.

The week's remaining matches

Jazireh-Sahab ..... Sun. 4/2 Amman  
Baqaa-Husseini ..... Sun. 4/2 Amman

Standings after Friday's matches

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Wihdat	20	12	6	2	38	19	42
Ramtha	20	12	4	4	29	12	40
Faisali	20	11	6	3	37	12	39
Qadissieh	20	10	5	5	37	21	35
Kufroum	20	9	8	3	29	20	35
Ahli	20	8	7	5	32	28	31
Husseini	19	7	7	5	32	17	28
Jazireh	19	7	6	6	33	24	27
Baqaa	19	6	3	10	28	42	21
Sahab	19	2	3	8	18	38	15
Jalil	20	2	3	15	27	62	9
Russeifa	20	-	-	20	15	82	-

## Magic Johnson meets Michael Jordan tonight

ROME (Agencies) — Earvin 'Magic' Johnson Saturday leads the LA Lakers against the league's leading team — the Chicago Bulls.

Worldwide coverage of the much awaited clash is expected to draw millions of basketball fans waiting to see the National Basketball Association's (NBA) hottest players Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan come face to face.

All eyes will be on the two modern-day giants of basketball as they take the court at the Forum in Los Angeles. It will be a game full of significance — matching the two names that have dominated the sport for the last decade. For the Bulls it also offers an opportunity to make a piece of NBA history.

Chicago have won 39 games and lost only three this season, which ties the record for the best start to an NBA season. Which team jointly holds that record? The Los Angeles Lakers. "Magic" and his young players will have an added incentive to beat the team of the moment.

As expected, Magic's return resulted in an impressive victory for the Lakers. They disposed of the Golden State Warriors 128-111 with the great man collecting 19 points. The Bulls, however, are a completely different proposition. Jordan, Pippen, Rodman and company will come into this game on the back of a 97-86 win over two-time defending NBA champions the Houston Rockets. It was their seventh straight win on the road, so even with the presence of "Magic," the Bulls will enter the game in a confident mood.

## U.S. Davis Cup captain cautious of Mexicans

NEW YORK (AP) — Tom Gullikson is playing it cautious for next week's opening

round of the Davis Cup against Mexico.

And it doesn't matter that he has two of the world's top players No. 5 Michael Chang and No. 14 Todd Martin — and Mexico has but one player ranked in the top 200.

"To get to round two we have to win round one," the U.S. Davis Cup captain said in a conference call.

The first round for the United States is Feb. 9-11 at the La Costa Resort and Spa in Carlsbad, California.

Hill sat out with a sore right wrist, an injury the



Orlando Magic center Shaquille O'Neal loses the ball as he's cornered by New York Knicks center Patrick Ewing (left) and forward Anthony Mason (R) in the first period of their NBA game, at New York's Madison Square Garden (Reuters photo)

## Bulls extend record with 17th straight win

SACRAMENTO (R) — The Chicago Bulls registered the best three-loss start in NBA history as Michael Jordan scored 27 points in a 105-85 victory over the Sacramento Kings Thursday.

The Bulls improved their record to a spectacular 40-3, eclipsing the 39-3 start by the 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers.

Bill Wennington scored 14 points and Toni Kukoc and Steve Kerr added 12 apiece for Chicago, which also extended its franchise-record win streak to 17 games and won its eighth consecutive road game.

"Some of the guys that played big roles in tonight's win set their names in the record books," Jordan said. "It's something to be proud of about but we still have a lot of work ahead of us."

Mitch Richmond scored 30 points and Tyus Edney added 17 for Sacramento, which lost for the second time in nine home games. The Kings played without Sarunas Marculionis and Brian Grant.

"I'm going to say the same thing the last 16 or 17 coaches have said, and maybe the 40 losing coaches that they've faced so far," Kings coach Larry St. Jean said. "That's a heck of a basketball team. What impresses me the most is their defence. They have a lot of people who can really move their feet."

In Detroit, Otis Thorpe scored 23 points and grabbed a season-high 14 rebounds as the Pistons, playing without Grant Hill, beat Indiana 87-70, snapping the Pacers' seven-game win streak.

Hill sat out with a sore right wrist, an injury the

second-year pro — highest vote-getter in all-star balloting the past two seasons — suffered when he fell over guard John Stockton and crashed hard to the floor in Monday's loss at Utah. X-rays revealed soft tissue damage in the wrist.

Lindsey Hunter added 11 of his 17 points during a pivotal 17-5 fourth-quarter run for Detroit, which snapped its two-game losing streak. The Pistons held the Pacers to a season-low 70 points on 34.6 per cent shooting.

Allan Houston added 21 points for Detroit.

Rik Smits led Indiana with 21 points and seven rebounds. Reggie Miller, who had averaged 24.8 points over the last five games, was held to nine points on 3-of-11 shooting.

In New York, Anthony Mason scored nine of his 21 points in the fourth quarter and Patrick Ewing added 23 with 14 rebounds as the Knicks beat the Orlando Magic 110-102 for their fourth straight win.

Hubert Davis scored 17 points and Derek Harper had 15 and 12 assists for New York, which beat the Magic for just the second time in six meetings to pull within 2½

games of the Atlantic Division leaders.

Mason, who started in place of John Starks, added eight rebounds and four assists. Starks triggered a 14-3 fourth-quarter run with five straight points.

Nick Anderson scored 30, including seven three-pointers, and Dennis Scott added 22 points for Orlando, which lost for the fourth time in five games. Penny Hardaway was held to six points on 3-of-15 shooting for the Magic, who have lost eight of 10 on the road and fell to 9-14 away from home.

Horace Grant had 19 points and 13 rebounds and O'Neal was held to 18 and 11 for Orlando, which hit 12 three pointers — the most ever against the Knicks in Madison Square Garden.

In Charlotte, Hakeem Olajuwon scored 32 points and Clyde Drexler notched his second triple-double in three games as the Houston Rockets defeated the Hornets for the fourth straight time, 116-111.

Drexler, who recorded his 20th career triple-double, had 16 points, 10 rebounds and 14 assists as the Rockets won for just the third time in the last eight games.

## RESULTS

Houston	116	Charlotte	111
Detroit	87	Indiana	70
Miami	124	Philadelphia	104
New York	110	Orlando	102
Dallas	103	Seattle	100
Milwaukee	108	Denver	102
Chicago	105	Sacramento	85

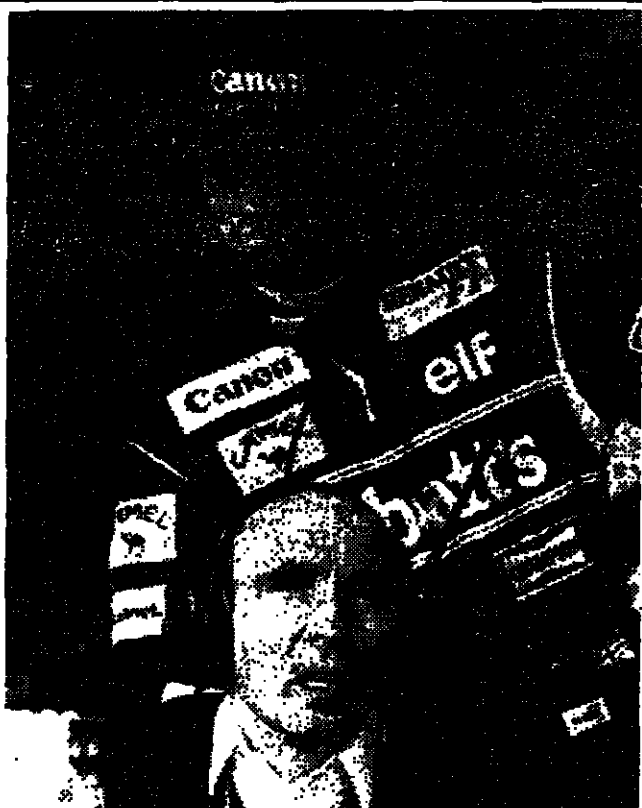
## No decision on Senna case yet

ROME (R) — A decision has not yet been reached on the Ayrton Senna crash case, the office of the investigating magistrate said on Friday.

"There has been no decision and no statement from the magistrate. That's the situation," an assistant to Bologna prosecutor Maurizio Passarini said.

She was responding to a British newspaper report which said Frank Williams and Patrick Head, the two senior officials of the Williams Formula One team, were expected to be charged with manslaughter following the inquiry into the death of their driver at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

The Independent report, citing Italian sources, said the prosecutor was expected to ask for two-year sentences for Williams and Head but that a form of plea bargaining could result in suspended sentences.



Frank Williams, head of the Formula One racing team pictured with British racing driver Damon Hill, is reported to be expected to face manslaughter charges over the death of driver Ayrton Senna. Senna died after crashing in the San Marino Grand Prix in May 1994 (Reuters photo)

"These are all hypotheses that are being made but on the basis of nothing, in the sense that the magistrate has not made any

statements, they are just suppositions," she said. She added that Passarini had not set a time limit to complete the investigation and the possibility of shelving it was not to be excluded.

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♥ Q J 6 5			
♦ A 10 6			
♣ A J			
WEST			
♠ 7 3 2			
♥ 10 9 2			
♦ 9 8 7			
♣ 10 9 5 2			
SOUTH			
♠ A 5			
♥ A Q J 10 9			
♦ Q 5 3 2			
♣ A K 8 4			

the defenders' cards in the non-vulnerable suits, including trumps. But the technique can work especially well if only the key hand is reduced to impotence, as this deal from the recent Fall North American Championships in Minneapolis illustrates.

North's jump to four clubs showed a singleton in the bid suit while agreeing hearts as trumps. Two club-bids followed, and South, with prime cards in every suit except clubs and a ruffing value, proceeded to the small slam.

West led a trump and, since declarer could ruff two of North's spades in hand, at first glance the late of contract seemed to hinge on declarer's ability to locate the queen of diamonds. But Tom Kiesel of St. Louis, sitting South, found an extra

chance.

The trump lead was won in the closed hand, the ace and king of spades were cashed and a spade was ruffed low. A trump to the jack provided the entry for a spade ruff high. Leaving a trump at large, declarer entered with a club to the jack.

On winning the king of clubs, East did not enjoy being saddled with the lead. A diamond exit would solve declarer's problem in that suit. If East exited with the ace of clubs, dummy would ruff and the queen of clubs would be declarer's 12th trick. When East chose to return a low club, declarer put up the queen and, when that held, dummy's losing diamond disappeared.

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## Liverpool back in title contention

LONDON (AP) — It's been years since the once all-conquering Liverpool team won the English League Championship. Now Roy Evans' team is back, challenging Newcastle and Manchester United for the title.

Liverpool, which won the title 10 times in 15 seasons before its recent slump, jumped over Manchester United into second place by winning a 2-0 victory at another high flying team, Aston Villa. It also cut Newcastle's standings lead to nine points.

"We know we have now got to put in this kind of performance week in and week out," Evans said after the Villa Park triumph.

But he knows his team still has a long way to go to catch Newcastle.

"Realistically, with quite a few games to go, you've got to say yes we are still in with a chance," Evans said. "But we would all like to swap positions with Kevin Keegan and Newcastle."

"Newcastle are in a great situation and it's the pressure on us to try and win every remaining game."

But Liverpool's track record shows that it is capable of doing just that.

When the team won the title in 1988, it went unbeaten for the first 29 games of the season, won the title with four games to spare and wound up losing only two of 40.

On the way to winning the League and Cup double in 1986, the team finished the season unbeaten in its last 17 games.

Evans' team currently is unbeaten in 10 and goes into Saturday's home game against Tottenham full of confidence. Even Villa manager Brian Little was impressed.

"Liverpool showed again just how much quality they have," he said. "I have no doubt they will be ready to take advantage if Newcastle show any sign of a slip at the top."



Andre Agassi

## Muster to replace Agassi as No. 1

MONTE CARLO (AP) — Because of a scheduling quirk, Andre Agassi will lose his world No. 1 spot to Austria's Thomas Muster in the next ATP Tour rankings.

Agassi, who took over as No. 1 from Pete Sampras at the Australian Open last week, will drop to third when the rankings are published Feb. 12.

The reason for the change is that the tournament in San Jose, California, is being played a week later this year because first-round Davis Cup matches are scheduled for the weekend of Feb. 9-11.

As a result, Agassi will lose the 204 computer points he picked up for winning in San Jose last year.

That will drop him from 4,495 points to 4,291. Muster, No. 2 in the current rankings, has no points to defend next week and will become No. 1 for the first time in his career with 4,474.

Sampras will move from No. 3 to Nov. 2 with 4,465. Boris Becker, winner of the Australian Open, will stay at No. 4.

Muster, last year's French Open champion, will become the 13th player to hold the No. 1 spot since the inception of the computer rankings in 1973.

Muster won 12 tournaments last year, 11 of them on clay. Other players, including Agassi, have said Muster does not deserve to be No. 1 because he has yet to prove himself on other surfaces.

"No, I say that in terms of the results, I was the best in the last 52 weeks," Muster said after learning he would move to the top of the rankings. "And there's no doubt about that."

The computer doesn't give you any presents."

The No. 1 ranking will be up for grabs again the week of Feb. 12, when Muster and Becker play in Dubai and Agassi and Sampras play in San Jose.

## Bailey helping Canadians forget Ben Johnson

NEW YORK (AP) — Canada's athletics programme fell as far and as fast as Ben Johnson following the 1988 Olympics.

That's when the Canadian sprinter tested positive after finishing first in the men's 100 metres.

Canadian athletes were looked upon with much skepticism, and a certain onus was placed upon them, even if they hadn't used drugs.

That stigma is beginning to change, ironically, thanks to another sprinter, Donovan Bailey.

Bailey's victory in the 100 metres at the 1995 world championships and the second-place finish by countryman Bruny Surin had tremendous impact on the sport in Canada. Much more so than Surin's victories in the 60 metres at the 1993 and 1995 world indoor championships.

"The sport was dead in Canada," said Bailey. "Canadians commit themselves wholeheartedly to an athlete or to a team, like the Toronto Blue Jays (baseball club). So they trusted Johnson. Since then, there's been a huge mistrust toward athletes. That was damaging to a lot of athletes."

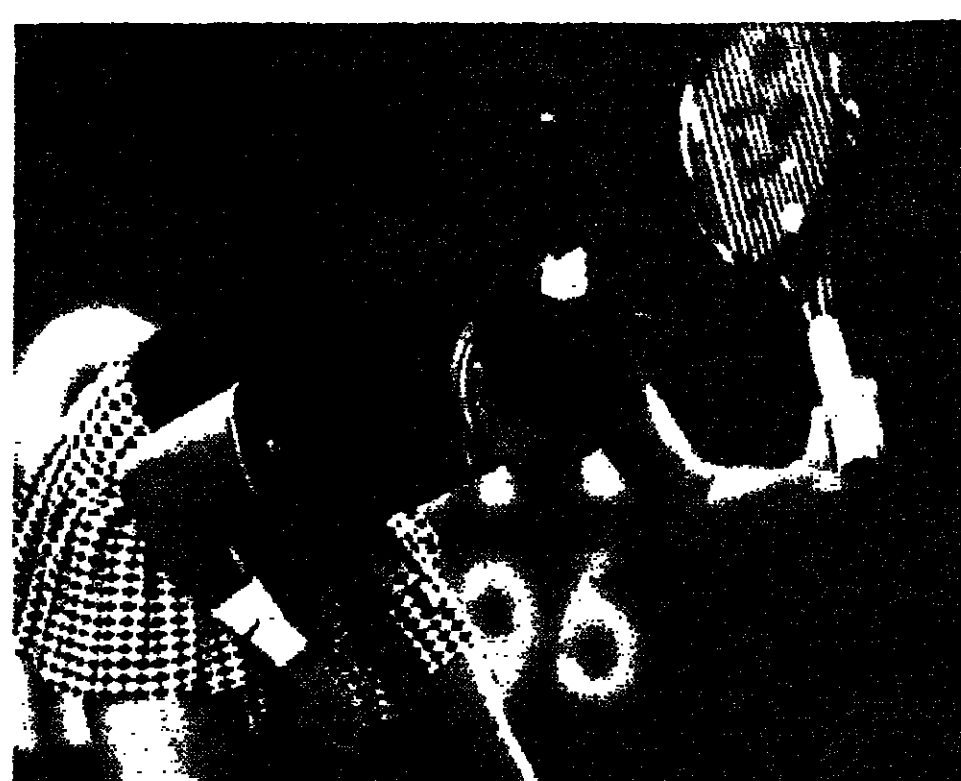
"Bruny was ridiculed because he was the next big sprinter. He wasn't taken seriously."

"It's now waking up. Corporations are supporting us, and with the results that Bruny and I had last year, there's been a huge jump."

Johnson's victory in Seoul was a big event in Canada — and so was his positive test result.

"It was a big scandal," Bailey said. "Everybody wanted to know what happened and why. It was a slap in the face.... all Canadians took it personally."

After Bailey won the 1995 world title, he was besieged with questions concerning Johnson, and brushed them off.



Top seed Monica Seles slams her racket down in frustration as she loses her quarter-final match against Croatia's Iva Majoli at the Pan Pacific women's indoor tennis tournament in Tokyo (Reuters photo)

## Seles suffers earliest exit since her comeback

TOKYO (AFP) — Monica Seles suffered her earliest exit since her comeback last year as she fell to Iva Majoli in the quarter-finals of the Toray Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament on Friday.

The world co-number one from the United States, who captured her fourth Australian Open victory last week, staved off two match points before going down 6-1, 6-7 (5-7), 4-6 in the 18-year-old Croatian.

"Next time, I don't think I'll play four weeks in a row. It's too tough emotionally, coming after a Grand Slam tournament and then refocusing," said Seles, who suffered a left shoulder strain a week ago.

"But she played a great match. I don't know what happened after the first set... but I lost the match — that's the reality," added the 22-year-old.

Seles had lost only seven games in the previous two encounters. She stood firm in her service games to take the first set with ease. But the remainder of the 118-minute match appeared to be a power-packed confrontation between the two hard-hitters with the momentum turning round a few times.

Seles broke Majoli in the seventh game of the second set to get ahead 4-3. But Majoli never hesitated to attack, relying on her dangerous forehand to break back for 4-4 before going into a tie-breaker, which she won to tie the match.

Seles, then, recovered from two breaks down at 0-3 in the tie-breaker to get ahead 4-4, but Majoli scored a crucial break in the ninth for 5-4, putting an end to a fifth deuce with a forehand winner, and served out for the match.

"I played so well also in the third set, coming back from 3-0 to going up 4-3 and having 40-15 at 4-all. I think I missed too many chances. Maybe I wasn't as eager as I



Croatia's Iva Majoli raises her arms in victory as she beats top-seeded American Monica Seles at the Pan Pacific tournament in Tokyo (Reuters photo)

should have (been), so I'm not proud of that part," said Seles.

Meanwhile, Majoli said: "She's the number one player in the world. Of course, it means a lot to me. I've been working really hard in the last couple of months and I think that work is paying off."

"She made a (few) more errors than she did in the Australian Open. But I think it is because I didn't give her a chance. The thing I tried to do is not to give her a chance to control the game and move me around the court. So I had to change something and it worked very good," added the Croatian, a quarter-final loser to Seles in Melbourne last week.

It was the first defeat for Seles this season after winning in Sydney and Melbourne and second after her comeback following the runner-up finish behind Steffi Graf of Germany in the U.S. Open in September.

Her previous earliest defeat was on April 30, 1993, when she was stabbed in the back in Hamburg in a quarter-final match against Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, which forced her out of competition for 28 months.

In the semi-final Saturday, Majoli will take on rising 15-year-old Swiss star Martina Hingis, who eliminated the last local hope, Naoko Sawamatsu, 6-1, 6-2.

The other semi-final match became an all-Spanish affair between 1994 Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez and former world number one Arantxa Sanchez Vicario.

## European Basketball

### Benetton join CSKA in quarters despite defeat

MOSCOW (R) — CSKA Moscow beat Italy's Benetton Treviso 84-70 on Thursday in their latest Group A men's Basketball European Championship series match, but both clubs are through safely to the quarter-finals.

The Moscow army team was already sure of a place in the final eight and Benetton went through after nearest challengers Olympique Antibes were beaten 98-83 by Olympiakos, who have also reached the quarters.

Olympiakos, finalists in the last two final fours, had a clear height advantage and broke at will with guard George Sigalas pumping 20 points and 19-year-old rising star Jim Papanikolaou adding 15.

It was Olympiakos's third straight win in Europe which brought them equal second with Benetton but with a

STANDINGS			
Group A			
	W	L	PTS
CSKA Moscow (Russia)	9	3	21
Olympiakos Piraeus (Greece)	8	4	20
Benetton Treviso (Italy)	8	4	20
Ulkerspor (Turkey)	6	6	18
Olympique Antibes (France)	5	7	17
Unicaja Malaga (Spain)	5	7	17
Bayer Leverkusen (Germany)	4	8	16
Iraklis Salonika (Greece)	3	9	15
Group B			
	W	L	PTS
Barcelona (Spain)	9	3	21
Panathinaikos (Greece)	7	5	19
Real Madrid (Spain)	7	5	19
Pau Orthez (France)	6	6	18
Cibona Zagreb (Croatia)	6	6	18
Virtus Bologna (Italy)	6	6	18
Maccabi Tel Aviv (Israel)	5	7	17
Benfica (Portugal)	2	10	14

better points record. The French club threw in

the towel early in the second half when Olympiakos hit 17

unanswered points, bringing alive the 14,000 home crowd. By contrast, it was a lacklustre match at the Palace of Sport in Moscow.

The Russians never lost their lead before a 4,000-strong crowd happy to see their team make amends for a shock 71-68 defeat last week by one of the weakest sides in the group, Iraklis Salonika of Greece.

CSKA's Igor Kudelin led the scorers with 19 points, one ahead of Benetton's Zjelko Rebracha and Henry Williams. CSKA's Sergei Panov and Yevgeny Kisurin helped make sure of victory with 16 points each.

CSKA went top of Group A with 21 points with Benetton and Olympiakos both on 20, with just two games left in the initial series the trio cannot be denied their quarter-final slots.

The final vacancy from Group A lies between four clubs with Ulkerspor of Turkey favourites.

In Group B, Barcelona are in the last eight after coming from behind to beat Cibona Zagreb 76-66.

They moved to 21 points, two clear of champions Real Madrid who put themselves back on course with a comfortable 76-64 win over France's Pau Orthez.

Panathinaikos are bracketed on 19 with real after a shock 96-87 defeat by bottom club Benfica.

But for all their problems, on and off court, the Greeks can still qualify, although all the chasing pack is tightly grouped.

## Jordan Electricity Authority

JEA declares about the extension of the closing date for the following tenders:

1- Tender No. JS 01/95 transmission lines is extended to be 12:00 a.m. on Thursday 29th of February 1996 instead of 10th February 1996.

2- Tender No. 115/95 for Tareq Substation is extended to be 10:00 a.m. on Monday 26th February 1996 instead of 12th February 1996.

Director General  
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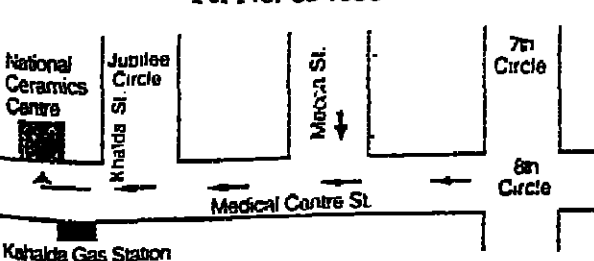
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## Sudan regrets U.N. resolution, departure of U.S. diplomats

KHARTOUM (AP) — Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha said that a critical U.N. resolution and the U.S. decision to withdraw its diplomats were part of a Western effort to isolate Sudan because it has an Islamic government.

In a statement to state television, Mr. Taha also said the State Department's contention that the diplomats were not safe was "not based on objective reasons."

On Friday, Mohammad Al Amin Khalifa, speaker of Sudan's parliament, told the state-run Sudan News Agency (SUNA) that the country was committed to fighting allegations it sponsored terrorism.

The American move, he said, "will never affect our national will against attempts to stamp terrorism allegations on Sudan."

Mr. Khalifa also challenged the American contention that Sudan was unsafe, saying "the U.S. ambassador has never found a safer place to do jogging than in Sudan."

It was an apparent reference to a former ambassador who frequently jogged along the Nile in Khartoum.

Relations between Sudan and the West have deteriorated since Lieutenant-General Omar Al Bashir took power in a 1989 coup and installed an Islamic regime.

Foreign aid has all but ceased. In 1993, the U.S. State Department added Sudan to its list of countries that support terrorism.

On Wednesday, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution, with strong U.S. backing, calling on Sudan to hand over three men wanted in last year's assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

The U.S. State Department then said it planned to

evacuate its 25 diplomats and guards from Khartoum because of increased worries over security, repeating its allegation that Sudan was harbouring extremist groups.

On Thursday, the State Department urged all American citizens living in Sudan to leave. There are an estimated 2,100 passport holders in Sudan, many of them spouses of Sudanese nationals. About 350 are aid workers, according to the State Department.

Mr. Taha told state television that "all of this is part of a psychological campaign against Sudan in a bid to isolate it on the Islamic, regional and international fronts."

He said Sudan "agrees with the U.N. Security Council on the condemnation of terrorism and all sorts of violence."

But he said the country disagreed with interpretations that the council resolution was highly critical, noting that it focused on urging Sudan to cooperate with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), in investigating the Mubarak case.

In its vote, the Security Council demanded that Sudan "undertake immediate action to extradite" three Egyptian extremists wanted in the June 26 attack on Mr. Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

It also urged Sudan to "desist from engaging in activities of assisting, supporting and facilitating terrorist activities," including providing them sanctuary.

Mr. Taha pledged that Sudan would "intensify contacts" with the OAU, Egypt and Ethiopia "to unveil facts related to the fleeing of the accused to Sudan."

He called the American decision to withdraw its diplomats "sorrowful, unjustified and not based on objective reasons."

## Israel expels 'spy' for Iran to Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Official sources on Friday confirmed that Israel had expelled to Jordan a Palestinian who allegedly spied for Iran and said the man would be questioned by Jordanian authorities.

The sources would not confirm or deny that the man, identified as Mohammad Raja Salem Mohammad, a 44-year-old who holds a doctorate in philosophy, was under custody in Jordan.

Mr. Mohammad, who holds a Jordanian passport like most Palestinians living in the West Bank, is a native of Beit Jala near Bethlehem. He was arrested by Israeli authorities at a relative's house in Bethlehem in November before the Israeli army withdrew from the town in line with the autonomy accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Mr. Mohammad was in Bethlehem to visit relatives after arriving from Jordan in October, the Jerusalem Post reported on Thursday.

He was brought to the King Hussein Bridge across the River Jordan and deported to Jordan, which could not turn him away because he held a Jordanian passport.

The expulsion was seen as a convenient way for Israel to close the case after having questioned the man for nearly three months.

According to reports in the Jerusalem Post and other newspapers in Israel, Mr. Mohammad, who lived in Lebanon and Syria as well as Jordan, told his Israeli questioners that he was recruited by a staff member of the Iranian embassy in Amman more than one year ago.

The man who recruited Mr. Mohammad was not identified and there was no indication what prompted the Israeli authorities to arrest him.

The Jerusalem Post said that before his arrest, Mr. Mohammad succeeded in passing to his "handlers" various maps in which "important security installations and government offices" were marked.

He was given a camera and money to buy film and equipment, and "he managed to take a number of photographs but was arrested before he was able to pass them on," said the Post.

The Post quoted a "senior security source" as saying that "Iran, Syria and other Arab countries have been making a great effort to obtain intelligence information on Israel, and the Iranian efforts have been intensified recently."

Iran describes itself as an arch-enemy of Israel and is a fierce opponent of the Middle East peace process. It said recently that it had heard of Israeli plans to attack its nuclear installations and had drawn up plans to retaliate in the event of such an attack.

Gideon Ezra, former deputy head of Israel's Shin Bet internal security agency, said he did not believe that Mr. Mohammad had succeeded in "endangering Israeli security."

Other reports in the Israeli press, quoting a Shin Bet statement, said Mr. Mohammad was also asked by his "handlers" to spy on Jordan.

In November, Jordan declared an Iranian diplomat, Saad Batni, persona non grata and asked him to leave the country after he was found to have been "inciting" Jordanians to stage attacks on Israeli visitors. The Iranian embassy here denied the charge and the Tehran Foreign Ministry, in retaliation, expelled a Jordanian official who was working at the Kingdom's embassy in the Iranian capital.

In mid-1994, the Iranian embassy in Amman was accused of being the main centre for coordination with the Palestinian militant group Hamas and passing Iranian funds to Hamas. Again, the embassy rejected the charges.

Both Iran and Jordan sought to play down the diplomatic flare-up over the expulsion of Mr. Batni. Both sides said they wanted to maintain cordial relations and Jordan sent its first ambassador to Tehran this month after a hiatus of more than 15 years.

## More bodies found in Colombo blast.

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Sri Lankan firefighters and police on Friday recovered four decomposed bodies, including that of a child, from buildings wrecked by a huge rebel suicide bomb blast in the heart of Colombo which killed up to 80 people.

"We're trying to pump water out of the central bank's basement for search teams to go in," fire department chief Jayampathy Kannangara told Reuters at the scene. "There could be more bodies trapped in the underground vault."

Major T.M.P. Tennakoon of the army engineering unit at the site of the disaster said he believed rescuers would take two more days to clear the rubble.

Army engineers were trying to lift a massive concrete slab that had collapsed at the entrance to the bank building which bore the brunt of the blast from a truck bomb containing an estimated 200 kilograms of high explosives.

At least 76 bodies were found by Friday morning and the toll could rise further, from a bomb the government has blamed on the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), officials said.

Hundreds of policemen were brought from the provinces to boost security in the city during the independence celebrations due to be attended by President Chandrika Kumaratunga, a police spokesman said.

Acting Police Inspector-General Mitra Ariyasinghe said an additional deputy inspector-general had been appointed to coordinate security arrangements.

"We had very tight security when the attack took place," Mr. Ariyasinghe said. "It is not possible to check each and every vehicle entering the city. In fact, people had blamed us for the inconvenience caused by heavy check-



Police rescue workers wearing gas masks stand over a body under the rubble of the destroyed Mercantile Investment building in Colombo Friday, two days after a massive bomb blast devastated much of the capital's financial district (Reuters photo)

The carnage in downtown Colombo has also wrecked financial services and shattered business confidence in Sri Lanka, which had been

banking on foreign capital to revive its war-weary economy, analysts said. The blast may have also jeopardised this cricket-crazy South Asian country's co-

hosting of the World Cup. Australia has said it wants to reconsider its participation in the wake of the blast. An annual Buddhist pageant scheduled here for

the weekend has already been called off due to security concerns.

The Navam Perahera, or pageant, usually involves a march through the streets of Colombo by hundreds of caparisoned elephants and thousands of traditional dancers and is a major tourist attraction.

However, police said the official ceremony marking the 48th anniversary of independence from Britain will go ahead under tight security.

Military rehearsals for the national event caused panic in the jittery capital Friday when blank artillery ammunition fired by the army was mistaken by residents for another bomb attack.

Telephone exchange were jammed by callers trying to check the loud bangs but officials said it was only dummy rounds fired by soldiers in Colombo's Independence Square, where a suicide bombing killed 21 people in August.

Wednesday's bombing, like the August explosion, was blamed on the LTTE, whose main stronghold of Jaffna in the north of the country was captured by security forces in December.

The Tamil Tigers had vowed to seek revenge for the defeat. Police are questioning two Tamil men arrested after the blast who allegedly confessed that they were members of attack group.

The two men allegedly had opened fire and cleared a path for the truck loaded with explosives which exploded at the 11-story central bank building.

The devastating attack came despite police and military checks on more than 1,500 vehicles daily in this capital of one million people. Police said they plan to in-

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## Peres leads poll amid election speculation

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres held a strong lead over opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu in an opinion poll published on Friday.

The Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper poll, published amid speculation elections could be held within three months, said Mr. Peres would receive 46 per cent of the votes if elections for prime minister were held now. Mr. Netanyahu would get 30 per cent.

His Labour Party would control 48 seats in the 120-member parliament, four more than it does now. Likud would garner 37 seats with 30 per cent of the vote.

Friday's figures represented a five point narrowing of Mr. Peres' lead over Mr. Netanyahu from a poll carried out by Yedioth in early January. Yedioth said the poll was taken among 500 people and had a margin of error of four per cent.

General elections, which will for the first time include direct election of the prime minister, are scheduled for Oct. 29, but leaders of both Likud and Labour are actively preparing for early elections, now expected to be held during the second half of May.

Mr. Peres has said he will announce his decision



Shimon Peres on an election date later this month.

The popularity of Mr. Netanyahu at 46 the leader of a new generation of Likud technocrats, plummeted following the Nov. 4 assassination of Labour Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing Jewish extremist.

Mr. Rabin's widow Leah publicly accused Mr. Netanyahu and Likud of fuelling anti-government violence by opponents of the Palestinian peace process which led to her husband's murder.

Mr. Netanyahu was quoted in the Israeli press Friday as saying that Mr. Peres would call early elections "because he is worried by the narrowing gap in the polls."

## Ciller abandons coalition quest

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said Friday that she had given up trying to form a government, after a fresh refusal from her right-wing rival Mesut Yilmaz to enter a coalition.

Ms. Ciller said she would see President Suleyman Demirel on Saturday.

Speaking at a news conference after a meeting with Mr. Yilmaz, Ms. Ciller said she presented a final proposal on a coalition between Mr. Yilmaz's Motherland Party and her True Path Party. The proposal contained two different formulas, both of which Mr. Yilmaz turned down.

Mr. Yilmaz, speaking several minutes afterwards, confirmed Ms. Ciller's remarks.

Turkey has been embroiled in a political crisis since the pro-Islamic Welfare Party won general elections in December, setting off frantic efforts among the right to force a coalition government.

Ms. Ciller was authorised to form the new government in late January after Welfare leader Necmettin Erbakan failed to find a partner for a coalition to be led by himself.

The main obstacle throughout to a True Path-Motherland alliance is a bitter personal feud between Ms. Ciller and Mr. Yilmaz.

## Islamists seen seeking JEA helm by default

By Sa'eda Kilani Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The final list of candidates for the Feb. 9 Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) elections indicates that Islamists are aiming at assuming eventual control of the association's council.

With the closing day for nominations on Thursday, the battle seems to have been settled in favour of the Islamists who had fielded strong candidates for the council seats and for the vice-presidency. The nationalists, known as the Green Bloc, seem to be divided, observers say.

Although there are eight other candidates for the post, the president seem to have been settled in favour of incumbent President Leith Shbeilat, currently detained for lese majeste.

There are seven independent candidates and two Islamists for the presidency, but many of them are likely to withdraw on election day.

Islamist sources say that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party will not contest the presidency seat but had fielded two candidates, Zuhair Kaseeh and Hassan Hawamdeh, in case something happens at the last moment. The two candidates, who are not considered as strong contenders against Mr. Shbeilat, will be withdrawn on election day "so as to leave it open for Mr. Shbeilat," to retain his post, the sources say.

According to the association's law, if the president's seat become vacant then the council could elect the vice-president as president.

(Continued on page 7)

## New Iranian missiles raise fears in Gulf

DUBAI (R) — Iran has restored its capability to fire anti-ship missiles at sea, raising Gulf Arab fears of their neighbours' growing ability to control the world's largest oil-exporting shipping lane, analysts said on Thursday.

"It is obvious that Iran is developing a capability to control shipping in the Gulf," said an Arab analyst of the waterway through which 15 million barrels of oil are exported everyday.

U.S. forces patrolling the Gulf this week said Iran successfully test-fired a Chinese C-802 anti-ship missile on Jan. 6 from a ship in the Arabian Sea just outside the Gulf.

"Iran now has an anti-ship capacity at sea. This is the first such capability Iran has had at sea since 1988," a Western officer said of growing concern in Washington and the Gulf.

However, the latest anti-ship missile capability "does

not mean Iran plans to attack anyone soon but is a serious development" in a region which controls about 70 per cent of the world's oil reserves, the Arab analyst said.

A Western oil shipping executive said: "Of course it is an improvement in capability but it does not indicate an Iranian intention to threaten shipping or anything of the sort."

A U.S. naval spokesman in the region said: "We are dealing with capability not with intention. We are dealing with what Iran has in its arsenal and what poses a potential threat to shipping."

U.S. forces, in one of the most serious clashes with Iran, attacked Iranian naval vessels in the Gulf in 1988, ending the Tehran's ability to launch anti-ship missiles from sea.

Iran's potential threat to Gulf shipping was not completely eliminated at the time but was restricted to land-

based systems like Silkorm Chinese missiles which were fired at U.S. and other targets during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Military sources in the region could not say how many of the radar-guided missiles, with a range of 100 kilometres, but Iran had said Iran could mount them on Chinese-made Houduong patrol boats, freely moving them in and around the waterway.

"Before you had to worry about missiles coming from one side on land, now it can come from any side," the Western officer said of Iran's latest seaborne ability.

The Arab analyst said: "This is an offensive weapon aimed at gradually being able to control shipping while Gulf Arab states are purchasing defensive arms to counter Tehran's buildup."

Iran launched a major rearmament plan after its arsenal was depleted during the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

Some Gulf Arab states responded by even larger arms procurements.

U.S. forces in the region clashed several times with Iranian units during the Iran-Iraq war when the two sides attacked Gulf shipping and many vessels were damaged by mines alleged to have been placed by Tehran.

Washington says Iran has four shore bases from which to launch anti-ship missiles. Last March the United States said Iran had deployed Hawk missiles close to the Straits of Hormuz, the Gulf's narrow and only entrance flanked by Iran and Oman.

Tehran has other surface-to-air missiles deployed on its Gulf shores and strategic Gulf islands, Western military officers in the region say.

Gulf Arab states and their Western allies are now watching to see when Iran would deploy a third Russian-made Kilo-class submarine in the area.

"The third submarine is due to be delivered to Iran this year," one official said. Iran is the only regional state to deploy submarines in the area.

"With three vessels Iran's submarine force has to be taken more seriously," said an Arab expert. "With two submarines, one is always in maintenance and the other is patrolling."

Western powers guarding the Gulf often have submarines in and around the region. The United States also has 12 military cargo ships carrying heavy arms and other emergency equipment for 20,000 marines and army troops in the region.

The pre-positioning of added U.S. military hardware in Qatar started last month and the Pentagon also has enough heavy armour for a U.S. Army brigade stored in Kuwait.



## Lawyers confiscate tape of Prince Philip's conversation

LONDON (AFP) — A tape of a telephone call between Queen Elizabeth's husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, and a "plumy-voiced" woman — recorded by a radio amateur who tuned into their frequency — has been handed to the queen's lawyers after days of negotiations, the Daily Mail reported Friday.

On Tuesday, the Sun newspaper claimed the conversation, which lasted 17 minutes, was recorded on Dec. 21 while Prince Philip discussed family business on his portable phone with Lady Penny Romney near the royal residence at Sandringham in eastern England. Friday's Mail reported that the mass-circulation Sun, which was offered the tape for £50,000 (\$75,000) by the radio amateur, had handed it over to the queen's lawyers voluntarily.

The Mail added that the contents of the tape, allegedly made by hospital worker Neville Hawkins, 47, will never be made public and may be destroyed unless needed in a police investigation of Mr. Hawkins. The Sun article did not publish excerpts of the telephone conversation but said the prince discussed the possible divorce of Prince Charles and Princess Diana. Camilla Parker-Bowles, Prince Charles' mistress, and Prime Minister John Major were also mentioned. On Wednesday Prince Philip, collision in Brandon, eastern England, but no one was injured.

The tape was recorded on a Sunday morning in an apartment in London. The woman, who was identified as a 47-year-old nurse, said she had recorded the conversation because she was "curious" about the prince's private life. She said she had recorded the conversation on a Sunday morning in an apartment in London. The woman, who was identified as a 47-year-old nurse, said she had recorded the conversation because she was "curious" about the prince's private life.

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## Free entrance to Louvre boosts visitors by 81%

PARIS (AFP) — Free entrance to the Louvre Museum of Art on Sunday a month boosted attendance by around 81 per cent over a normal day in January, the museum said, ahead of the next free day on Feb. 4. Visitors on Jan. 7, the first day of free entrance under a recent decision by Culture Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy, totalled 25,400, compared with around 14,000 on a normal Sunday on Jan. 7. An opinion poll taken on Jan. 7 revealed that the concession had attracted local people above all, with 75 per cent of the visitors being French, against a usual average of 40 per cent, and 64 per cent from the Paris region, against 26 per cent. Some 44 per cent of visitors questioned said they would not have come had entrance not been free. There will be no charge on the first Sunday of every month in the future.

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## 'Impoverished' recluse leaves \$647,000 to charity

HONG KONG (AFP) — A recluse who lived without water and electricity has left five million Hong Kong dollars (\$647,000) to a local charity here, Welfare Organisation Community Chest said. Sze Miu-Ngan, 46, whose decomposed body was found by a caretaker who went to complain about the late payment of management fees on Jan. 20, left a will asking the Community Chest to establish an endowment fund in her name with her personal fortune. Neighbours were quoted by press as saying Sze had no friends, rarely left her apartment and had to borrow water from neighbours because she could not afford to pay water bill. She also lived without electricity. However, a spokesman for the Community Chest described Sze as "a lady full of compassion."

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